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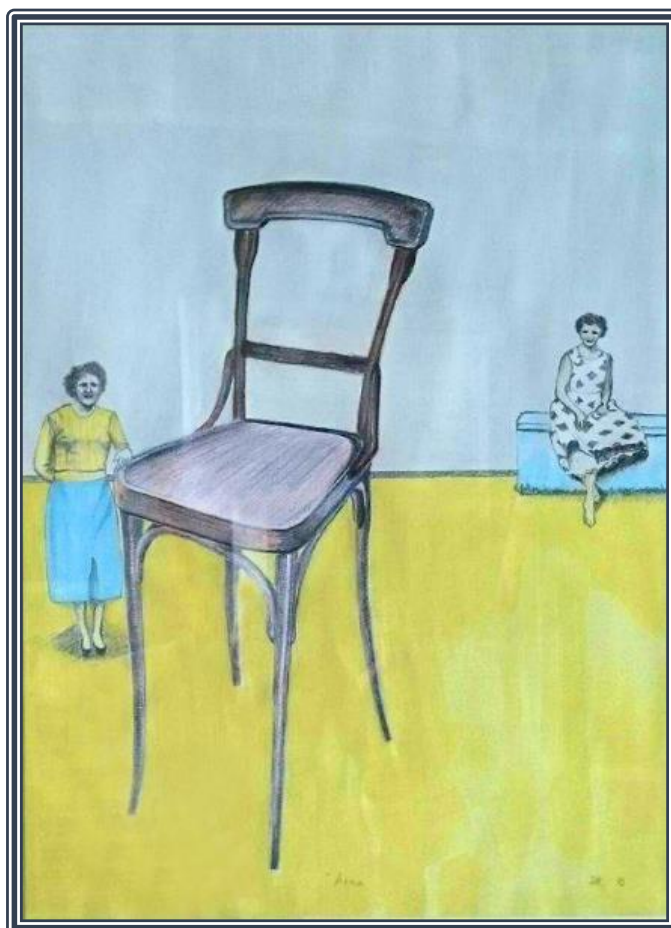
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Volunteering as a balancing act: who's got time for that?

by

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Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Edinburgh

August 2018



Front Cover
'Anna'
By
Frances Ryan
2015

Abstract

This thesis explores the temporal dimensions of women's voluntary involvement in civic activities. How and why people find or make the time to volunteer within their busy lives is a puzzle given that volunteering is not always easy. It is not just about finding/having time, it is also about synchronising with others and fitting into a group when needed, and how this might be dovetailed with other commitments in the life of a volunteer.

The thesis presents an account that allows for agency through negotiation within the constraints of everyday demands. It argues that individuals cannot freely choose how to use their time, that it is always a question of negotiation with others – partners, children, employers, organisers, bureaucracies and so on.

This study adds distinctive conceptual contributions to the field of community and volunteering studies by using the work of Norbert Elias to understand how women negotiate the various networks in their lives. Data from three case studies of women's volunteering are analysed using Elias's concept of the 'we-I balance' to explore the motivations behind time for 'community' commitments being carved out of busy schedules. The three case studies offer distinctive sites for examining ideas around volunteering and civic participation and the making of community – and the challenges and negotiations involved in this.

Through ethnographic fieldwork, including interviews, informal conversations and poetry workshops, the study identifies volunteers as people who skilfully negotiate their time with the organisation, with significant others in their lives, with themselves, and with technology in order to facilitate their volunteering. In the process, it presents findings about how time is experienced, managed and appropriately paced, and the processes by which the agendas of collectivities and of individuals come to be compatible in the 'we-I balance'.

Lay Summary of Thesis

This thesis explores the temporal dimensions of women's community civic engagement and the innovative ways they have found to 'volunteer' in their communities. Time permeates all women's accounts of their lives in one way or another, and one question asked in this study is 'How do the many facets of time shape women's involvement in civic engagement?' The thesis focuses on women's everyday lives in the community and notes that their public community work is intrinsically linked to the private domestic sphere. This connection means that they cannot freely choose how to use their time. Rather it is always a question of negotiation with others – partners, children, employers, organisers and organizations. The study reports findings that show how women's specific positions in society influence how their time may be used and what powers they have within these negotiations. Time is gendered – on different levels. This is reflected in the diversity of ways in which women engage with causes that benefit themselves, their families, and the wider community, but also in the ways that women are, at times, restricted from accessing these same causes.

The study not only explores the negotiations women have to make in order to carve out time for themselves, or family, or volunteering, it also investigates the formal and informal dimensions of time within women's volunteering. These matters have a bearing on who gets to participate and on the dynamics that pull people into the centre of a group, or push them to the periphery. Data from three case studies of women's volunteering are analysed using Norbert Elias's concept of the We-I balance to explore the motivations behind time for 'community' commitments being carved out of busy schedules. The analysis also raises questions about what 'counts' as volunteering, given that not everyone who volunteers identifies with the label. The argument is supported by findings about how time spent volunteering is experienced, managed and appropriately paced, and the processes by which the agendas of collectivities and of individuals come to be compatible in the 'We-I balance'.

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Images and Figures

Front Cover: 'Anna' (2015) by Frances Ryan: Frances created this artwork after we worked together on a community art project. We had been discussing the concern that some community members had over the future of their groups and lack of new (younger) members joining. The empty chair represents these concerns.

This artwork now proudly hangs beside my work area at home.

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Declaration of Authorship

I, Maggie Laidlaw declare that the thesis entitled 'Volunteering as a balancing act: Who's got time for that?' and the work presented in the thesis are both my own, and have been generated by me as the result of my own original research. I can confirm that:

This work has been done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at the University of Edinburgh.

- Where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this university or any other university, this has been clearly stated.
- Where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;
- Where I have quoted the work of others, the source is always given.
- I have acknowledged all main sources of help;
- Where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself

Any included publications are my own, except where indicated throughout the thesis and cleared identified on the declaration page of this thesis.

Some sections of this thesis relating to Norbert Elias, have been part of a submission by myself and Professor Graham Crow, 'Norbert Elias's extended theory of community: from established-outsider relations to the gendered we-I balance', and is under consideration by The Sociological Review.

Signed 

Date: 22nd August 2018

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To mum and dad, you are both always there to lend a hand whenever I am in need. Thank-you to you both. An additional thanks must go to mum, who helped give the title to this thesis.

Thank you to friends, old and new, who have supported me throughout this journey and cheered me along with words of encouragement.

Finally, to my children, David, Samantha and Chloe. You are the joy in my heart. Thank you for cheering me on – I wouldn't be who I am today without you.

1. Prologue: Thoughts and reflections

When does the last leaf drop?
When does it finally teeter
from its temporal tightrope?
I wish I hadn't made those plans
I've so much still to do
Oh, the guilt I feel when I see
That wee plant in the corner
I forgot to water - again!
Old photographs on the shelf I forget to dust
Grandmother's wedding ring - that mither entrusted
me with
In my mind I see blankets, worn and frayed
Cream edges coloured ochre with age
I wish I could disappear for days
on a feathered eiderdown
Patterns stitched with lavender threads,
and piles of books with pages curled, over read
An old song cuts through the silent room
Stirring thoughts of past summer loves
And chasing away the gloom
Of the dreich winter day
A new family baby will arrive tomorrow
I think we're organised
I'll make some tea, the kettle's boiled
Did I leave the dog outside?
(ML, 2016)¹

¹ Poets do not always follow the rules of punctuation or grammar, and so throughout this thesis, the poems, created by the women in the study, may, or may not contain punctuation.

'Mither' is also a Scottish colloquialism for mother.

2. Introduction

This ESRC funded study is linked to the Connected Communities 'Imagine' consortium. The project was pre-designed as 'Making time to be part of the community', and required that the study focus on people's identification with communities and their management of competing commitments to the various communities of which they are a part. Existing literature points to communities being gendered and from there, this thesis developed to explore the ways in which this happens through volunteering.

I am mother and a lone parent. I am also a student, employee, volunteer, activist, citizen, sister, daughter and friend. I am someone who wants to make better futures for myself, my family, friends and wider social community; however, negotiating all of these factors often feels like an impossibility. Friends and family often ask "How do you manage it all?", and I reply (as many women in this study also replied) "I don't really know – you just do – don't you? You just get by."

For as long as I can remember, I have watched women around me struggle with time and multiple labours. My grandparents, who took care of me as a young child, were described as doing so, not because my parents both worked, but because my mother worked. My mother always worked: in employment, in the home, in her parents' home and with chores brought from other people's homes. My parents shared the cooking, and it was dad who would make bacon sandwiches for us all on Sundays after church. It was mum, however, who did the laundry and the ironing. Mum who bent over on her hands and knees scrubbing floors, and brushing down the stairs with a carpet brush. Mum picked us up from events, and mum made the pots of soup, did the shopping, made beds, and cleaned the lavatory. It was mum who woke in the night to care for us when we were sick. For over twenty-five years, mum worked constant nightshift as a nursing assistant in a hospital. She worked on average forty-four hours a week – however, because she

worked night shift, she worked eight nights on (shift), six nights off, working eleven hours in each twenty-four-hour day - so these forty-four-hour average weeks actually became eighty-eight hours over eight days. In later years, during those eight days, working eighty-eight hours in total, she also looked after my three small children in the mornings to allow me to go to work. Now as an eighty-year-old, my mother still takes in other people's ironing to raise a little extra money as her pension doesn't stretch far enough to allow for any luxuries, despite her having paid into a small private pension all of her working life.

Aside from my mother, I look around me and I see women in my immediate community, working strenuously, but quietly, under the radar: organising local events, gala days for the children, Christmas events, sitting on community councils, organising litter picks, running youth clubs, church events, mother and toddler groups, protesting and raising awareness of local issues. I notice women in the community as they notice the things around them that are not up to standard, and then gather together to find solutions. This is not to suggest that men do not help in the community, of course they do – but I bring to light the women who do these things, because when I hear these many women speak, I hear in their conversations, language about juggling time, fitting things in, and managing in a way that I don't seem to hear from the men in the community. When I hear these women talk, I hear them describe their time in relation to others. When I hear them in conversation during their community endeavours, I listen as they tell each other all the tasks they will have to do at home when they return, and I am listening as they consider whether they are 'good enough' at managing it all.

Like these women I mention, most of us have at one time or another considered our place in the future, whether through simply trying to structure our own lives, or through imagining better futures for our families, our communities, or even wider society. By positioning 'futures' in the plural, this study explores the diversity of ways in which women actively engage with their communities in voluntary practices that benefit

themselves, their families, and the wider community. Reflecting on the temporalities within the everydayness of women's community practices promises to uncover how dimensions of time (such as speed, rhythm, sustainability, and longevity) intermingle with expectations of social change. Teasing out their structural connections helps us to make sense of time and community given that they are inextricably bound up with each other. One cannot be in space without being in time and vice versa. However, this does not necessarily mean that all spaces contain the same social time, or that we experience time equally in all spaces.

So the overall focus in this thesis, 'How do women have time for volunteering?' is an interesting one because people often say that they are very busy. In academic debates, the idea that the pace of life is speeding up is associated with the notion that people are increasingly 'time poor' (Pahl, 1988). Consequently, this question also asks how organisations ever find volunteers - and keep them - given all the other demands on volunteers' time. It's certainly a puzzle how and why people find or make the time to volunteer - it's even more of a puzzle given that volunteering isn't always easy. Therefore, it's not just about finding/having time, it is also about having time to fit into an organisation when the organisation needs you, and how this might be dovetailed with other commitments in the life of a volunteer.

Common sense might then tell us that the answer to the question 'who's got time for volunteering?' might be people with lots of time to spare. From this point of view, volunteering is something that is done at one's leisure. My own experiences of volunteering left me questioning whether this is accurate.

3. Analytical Framework

This thesis will explore the formalities and informalities within the temporal dimensions of women's community civic engagement. Time, in its many dimensions, permeates all individuals' narratives in one way or another, and one question asked in this study is 'How do the many faces of time shape the individuals' involvement in civic engagement?' How do people make the time for civic engagement – and what do we mean by 'making' time'? Finding time for something suggests that time is sitting around waiting to be found – that it is something 'external', which flows 'of itself and from its own nature' (Nowotny, 1992, p.426) and we just have to capture it. However, this study suggests that individuals with busy lives actually make a conscious effort to 'create' or 'carve' time from their lives in order to engage in specific activities – in this case their participation in various forms of civic engagement – and that individuals are more inclined to 'make' time for specific activity if it has some symbolic relationship to the person.

On one hand the thesis explores and presents a negotiation that allows for agency within the constraints of everyday demands. On the other hand, it argues that we as individuals cannot freely choose how to use our time, that it is always a question of negotiation with others – partners, children, employers, organisers, time zones, infrastructure and so on. The data highlight how an individual's specific position in society influences how their time may be used and what powers they have within these negotiations. This suggests that time exists on different levels. This is being reflected in the diversity of ways in which women in this study engage with causes that benefit themselves, their families, and the wider community, but also in the ways that they are, at times, restricted from accessing these same causes.

The study not only explores the negotiations an individual has to make in order to carve out time for themselves, or family, or volunteering, it also investigates the formal and

informal dimensions of time within their volunteering. This leads us to ask ‘who gets to participate?’ What are the dynamisms that pull people into the centre of a group – or push them to the periphery? These kinds of forces are very difficult to escape from, and reflect pressure of expectation/obligation and difficulties of saying No. The argument will be developed that temporal patterns of involvement and engagement are negotiated, but in contexts bequeathed from the past that embody norms of appropriate behaviour.

More specifically, the main chapters will explore

‘Negotiations within organisations’.

‘Negotiations with other people (family, friends, neighbours, workmates).

‘Negotiations with self’.

‘Non-human negotiations’ (Digital communication, technologies and ‘time-saving’ devices.

A social analysis of time – focusing on time as qualitative – as events, activity and relationships – and not simply as time as quantitative and equally distributed - will be a starting point. Discussing the concept of social time from the works of major sociological theorists, (Durkheim, 1984; Giddens, 1984, 1987; Marx, 1942; Elias, 1992, 1998, 2001), then leads to further examinations of social time by Adam (1989, 1990, 1995, 2004), feminist analyses of time (Bittman and Wajcman, 2000; Bryson, 2007; Davies, 1990, 1996; Felski, 2002; Wajcman, 2016), time and agency (Greenhouse 1996, 2014), and rhythms of social life (Lefebvre, 2004; McNeill, 1995; Zerubavel, 1981). Exploring these areas allows the study to ask questions about how we live and experience time as individuals in communities; the points of connection within our ‘everyday’, and the routines, habits and power techniques very much associated with time, while also exploring how some of these same concerns impact on the individual in the community, and their ability to access and engage in civic participation.

Investigating how 21st-Century UK women engage with their communities in practices of social change and community-building is hardly possible without also exploring the temporalities that surround their day to day lives, and the ways in which they organise and manage temporal schedules. Within the realm of community engagement and activist work, some people may find it easier to contribute time to a cause that has a definite time scale: one that can be planned for, and around. On the other hand, some find it more suitable to help out when and if they can, without committing to set hours or times. How then do groups and organisations keep their volunteers and members interested in the long term, and how do members manage and fit these activities and 'voluntary' tasks into their everyday lives? Reflecting on the temporalities within the everydayness of women's community practices and activism may uncover how dimensions of time (such as speed, rhythm, sustainability and longevity), intermingle with perceptions of social change.

In order to explore these questions this thesis focuses on three very different organisations (named below) to help me elucidate problematic areas within understandings of how women live and experience time while participating in various forms of civic engagement.

The study investigates:

- Three very different organisations, through which women are acting as agents of change in their communities:
 - Rape Crisis (RC – a support service in Scotland for women and girls aged 13 and over who have been raped, sexually assaulted or sexually abused at some point in their lifetime).
 - Women for Independence (WFI - a crowd-funded political activist group that emerged during the Scottish Independence Referendum (WFI, 2015)
 - 'Tangled Rose' (TR) (pseudonym) (a small self-funded group of retirement age line dancers, who support and raise awareness of community concerns through the use of pantomime).

- How women volunteers experience, and manage, the various dimensions of time within their leisure, rest, family, paid and unpaid working lives.
- How the use of Norbert Elias's works on community and the 'we-I' balance help with understanding of how women negotiate between the various networks and commitments in their lives.

This research therefore consists of four major parts which are interconnected. I will attempt to develop an understanding of time from a feminist perspective. I will secondly attempt to develop an understanding of community engagement from a feminist perspective, and to analyse three specific groups of women from this perspective. The focus here will be on different types of engagement through which women participate in communities but it also concerns lifestyle, ambition, power, and control within communities and organisations. Thirdly, focussing on these concerns of power structures associated with time, I will attempt to develop an understanding of the relationality of these women's lives. The forth major part will explore how researchers might consider issues of both time and methods when conducting research with communities and participants.

My approach to this research will be to treat the research questions as both philosophical and sociological ones, with both conceptual and empirical components, asking how we live and experience time as individuals in communities. It will attend to the points of connection within our 'everyday', and the routines, habits and power techniques very much associated with time (Adam, 1990, 1995, 2004), while also exploring how some of these same concerns impact on voluntary work and organisations.

I will weave together insights from key thematic areas of relevance to my research (social time theory, theories of community and civic engagement and Norbert Elias's concept of we-I balance) with a view to enhancing conceptual and theoretical understanding of these issues as they relate to multiple and intersecting identities across the categories of

gender, community, and divisions of time use: to understand the roles of different types of female community 'work' (in its broader senses), and the possible implications this may have for the way 'individual', 'community, and 'time' are framed within our imaginings of better futures. Elias has proved fruitful here because his ideas are open to creative engagement with gendered analysis, even if he only touched on these things. Elias may not seem like an obvious choice given my feminist approach, however, I would not be alone in returning to Elias. Sasha Roseneil as a feminist has gone back to Elias to help feminist understandings of relationality (Roseneil, 2013; Roseneil and Ketokivi, 2015). I then seek to combine 'negotiation' with relationality, because Elias does not seem to give enough agency to people.

There is a wealth of literature about women's activism and volunteering, including publications that examine the experiences of volunteers prior to volunteering (Gladstone, 2013). There is, however, relatively little knowledge and understanding of the 'day-to-day' (Giddens, 1984) practicalities and temporal experiences of women's community voluntary practices. Perhaps it is the language used to describe community or voluntary work? This study focuses upon these gaps and explores how they sustain their interests within the often multifaceted components of their lives. It looks at how they experience and envisage change in the short and long term, and asks if their contributions remain hidden within the larger picture of community engagement (Callaghan, 2011; Dominelli, 1990; Jupp, 2012; McCabe et al. 2010), and changing landscapes of 'community empowerment'. These questions go right to the heart of understanding how our future imaginings involve politics, fun, hopes, fears, desires, pauses, moments, connections, pondering, mobilisation and remobilisations - all of which highlight the different things that we need from life, and all of which may act as incentives or hindrances for change.

The study will review social theories of time; how we experience and make assumptions of time and how these assumptions perhaps impact on our lives. I am aware that it is a

compressed account that I provide, however it is important in providing the setting for the rest of this thesis. I will then continue with a theoretical frame of how women's relation to time in the community is gendered in two important ways. On one hand I argue that this present-day dominant temporal consciousness has partly risen out of male interests in the reproduction of the status quo and that this has a variety of implications for women's everyday lives in the community – where their public community work is intrinsically linked to the private domestic sphere. Women's specific position in society influences how their time may be used and what powers they have within these negotiations. Therefore, time is gendered – on different levels. This is reflected in the diversity of ways in which women actively engage with causes that benefit themselves, their families, and the wider community. Reflecting on the temporalities within the everydayness of women's community practices is intended to uncover how dimensions of time (such as speed, rhythm, sustainability and longevity) intermingle with perceptions of social change.

Then, before moving on to the main chapters, a background to the case study groups will be given, as well as a description of the various methods in this study. The discussion of methods will analyse the benefits and drawbacks of collaborative research, in addition to discussion of the temporality of methods when engaging in the democratic process of participant interviews. Description and analysis of the use of poetry will be in-depth, covering the development of workshops and various types and uses of research poetry.

I will illustrate how relations to time are instrumental in shaping the lives and activities of these women and their civic engagement. The women in this study range with respect to age, education, employment, class and wealth. Using interview, participatory, and poetic data, I explore the relationships between time, power and the various dimensions of their lives as formed by their volunteering, family and home life, employment, and place in the wider community.

4. Literature Review: Time, community and volunteering

Investigating how 21st-century UK citizens engage with their communities in practices of social change and community building is hardly possible without also exploring the temporalities that surround our day-to-day lives, and the ways in which we organise and manage temporal schedules. Within the realm of community engagement and voluntary work, some people may find it easier to contribute time to a cause that has a definite time scale: one that can be planned for, and around. On the other hand, some may find it more suitable to help out when and if they can, without committing to set hours or times. Because groups and organisations are interested in keeping their volunteers and members in the long term, how members manage and fit these activities and voluntary tasks into their everyday lives needs to be understood. This chapter will therefore look at the sociological literature on time, the literature on community, and the literature on volunteering to establish what we already know about who has got time for volunteering.

The literature included here invites readers to think about time as a 'complex and contested field of interactive relations' rather than as fixed units of measurement moving in one direction. Calling for a deeper understanding of the 'social life' of time encourages one to think about representations of time within our everyday encounters, and paying attention to how time is made through relations, but also 'to the ways that relations themselves happen through the organisation, conceptualisation and experience of time' ('The Social Life of Time', 2018. para: 2).

The chapter focuses on this social concept of time, asking how particular constructions of time challenge or enact particular forms of relationality while making links with wider community, gender and volunteering literatures.

4.1 Investigating time and social theory

For Giddens (1984), time is not something that sits around waiting to be found, it is not an abstract entity external to the individual, existing in 'fixed immutable units' (Knights, 2006, p.254), but is instead a reflection of social routines and socially-constructed practices and encounters of meals, sleep, work, and other social relations (Adam, 1990; Lefebvre, 2004; Zerubavel, 1981). Similarly, for Elias, temporalities of culture and nature interconnect with one another. They cannot be separated into social and natural time.

Data and measuring time in general, cannot be understood on the basis of a conception of the world as split into 'subject' and 'object'.....'not 'people' and 'nature' as two separate entities but 'people in nature', is the basic concept which is needed to understand 'time' (Elias, 1992, p.8).

In modern capitalist societies time becomes a commodity and is subject to speeding up (Bastian et al., 2014). Marx's (1934) discussions on the working day within industrial capitalism viewed time as a commodity, based on power and class structures, and where the use of clock-time intensified. Greenhouse draws upon similar concepts of time, power and agency to establish her argument that agency is not a neutral concept, but rather a cultural construct where time plays a powerful role within political landscapes and policy-making (1996, 2014). She suggests that where time is presented as occurring homogeneously across a society, as is overwhelmingly the case with linear time, this should not be interpreted as 'natural' but rather as a product of social construction (1996, p.4). She argues that there are 'always multiple ways of living time within any society, each with their attendant values, which in turn guide different constructions of the past and hopes for the future' (Bastian, 2011, p.154), and that new modes of time are frequently enforced through 'people's participation in social institutions, such as work, school, religious or political ritual, or law' (Greenhouse, 1996, p.96). Fraenkel

(2018) draws upon this enforced lack of agency and time sovereignty to explore the struggles within homeless families in New York. The study also highlights how temporal rhythms and routines of family life act as a means of resilience to the linear time demands from government agencies that impact negatively on life within homeless families.

The dominance of linear time creates the idea that time comes from somewhere and moves, in one direction, somewhere else rather than also being repetitive, cyclical and rhythmic (Adam, 2004; Giddens, 1984; Kristeva, 1981; Lefebvre, 2004; Levi-Strauss, 1968; McNeill, 1995). However, time can also consist of 'one-off' moments that shape how we think about time across our lives: before/after the birth of a child or death of a parent, and which can impact on our everyday repetitive practices.

We can see at least three interweaving forms of temporality that exist in all moments of social life: our day-to-day encounters that are expressed in repetitive practices; the lifespan of the individual, which intersects our day-to-day by the consciousness of our inevitable demise (Heidegger, 1980); and the dimensions of social time that exist long after we are gone, and in which our activities have created and instituted continuity, tradition and change (Adam, 1990, 1995, 2004; Giddens, 1984). The latter two of these dimensions may seem quite far removed from the momentary practices and activities of our daily lives, however all three are inextricably linked. Within the myriad of these overlapping and interwoven dimensions or perspectives of time, and within any understanding that time is associated with change, stability, control, measurement or a combination of these, questions of how all of these dimensions relate to one another are rarely given much thought within our routine daily activities (Adam, 1995, 2004; Greenhouse, 2014; Knights, 2006; McNeill, 1995).

One might ask how we experience subjective time if time is, as Giddens suggests, 'a reflection of social practices': the everyday practices of eating, sleeping, travelling to

work according to our social landscapes? Or the ways in which 'the past, present and future are caught up in life-stages, activities and commodity' (Adam, 1995, p.6). Everyday life, in all of its social encounters and practices, is a temporal term, and can be explored within the context of rhythm, repetition, and routine. We make assumptions about time in the metaphors and language we use, and the way we expect to experience time. Adam (1995) discusses these references to time within the English language, and the ways in which we move freely through phrases such as 'clock time', 'summer-time', 'play-time', 'lunch-time', 'bad' and 'good' times, knowing what they mean without giving much consideration to their differences (Adam, 1995, p.20). Time is understood here as representations and symbols, which are often learned as children, 'if one grows up in a society in which this concept and [social] institution [of time] are at home' (Elias, 1992, p.11). The use of our language and how we think about time may remind us of the assumptions we make about time, and how these assumptions get in the way of us doing what we want to do without us really reflecting on them.

Both 'find time' and 'make time' are always in general conversation and we use these metaphors without really thinking about what they mean – or how we really experience time or envisage change. 'Finding time' might suggest that time is sitting out there waiting to be 'found'. On the other hand, 'making time' conjures up ideas that time is something that we can invent or create. Our (English) language has become so condensed that we often overlook how we use metaphors of time to mean something much more complicated. Unpicking these problematic areas of language and assumptions of time, to explore our lives in relation to other notions of time can have value in relation to how we value paid work and unpaid work. Assumptions that one time is more valuable than another simply because of a financial aspect: because it can be quantified, broken down or commodified, or that there are stark differences between them, impact upon how we value unpaid/leisure/family/personal time, and which can

have influence over funding, status and policy-making within voluntary work and community projects.

It is also one thing to imagine a better future, but the question of how this comes about is where one often needs a 'theory of change' (Taplin and Clark, 2012; Vogel, 2013). It is not enough just to have an idea of how things could be different, and then just think everyone will recognise the brilliance of that idea – or that 'a miracle happens' putting it all in place. A theory of change is a process and a product, often described as a 'sequence of events that is expected to lead to a particular desired outcome' (Vogel, 2013, p.3). However, these 'sequences of events' may suggest that theories of change are positioned within dominant linear approaches to time which do not always take account of the multiplicities of time I have mentioned. So how then do we go about investigating 'time and community' as an 'ethical, rather than scientific [or quantitative] concept' (Knights, 2006, p.253)?

When investigating time, from points of connection to more general discussions on the multiple temporalities of our everyday existence (Adam, 1990, 1995, 2004; Bastian, 2011; Birth, 2004; Bryson, 2007; Knights, 2006), problems can arise employing methodologies that explore time and community (Bastian, 2014; Birth 2004), or that capture the individual's temporal experience within a landscape that assumes universal standardised time and, when looking at the individual in the community, explore whether their experiences of time are indeed distinctive from their surrounding community. Kevin Birth (2004), picking up on Levi-Strauss (1968) and Giddens (1984, 1987), opens up interesting thoughts on the multiple ways in which people experience time across various cultures, and the importance of adopting research methods that account for the ways in which people experience time. Lefebvre's ideas about rhythms prompt similar comparative ideas (Lyon, 2018).

In our immediate communities, we can be inclined to make assumptions about eating, sleeping and working in roughly the same daily patterns, that are themselves embedded within 'larger cycles of repetition: the weekend, the annual holiday, the start of a new semester' (Felski, 2000, p.81). Felski asks whether, or how, we can explain the fact that 'individuals and groups perceive time very differently, and yet seem, in crucial respects, to inhabit the same time' (2000, p.1). Linear time assumptions do seem to propose that time is an equally distributed resource where each individual receives his/her allotted share (Bastian, 2011, 2014). For Lefebvre (2004) the repetition of the everyday is a riddle: the natural day-to-day rhythms that have changed little over centuries fundamentally sitting at odds with the progress and accumulative character of linear time.

How then do researchers begin to unpick how time is experienced in a social environment, where differently-abled bodies are often expected to assume similar temporalities, or how to consider differences between professional time and leisure times, unpaid and paid work times, times when our bodies are well and healthy, and times when they are not? What does this mean about our understanding of the temporal challenges we face every day? Being encouraged to value routine, structure, punctuality and regularity, prompt us to overlook the multiple, overlapping or different temporalities of our existences, or the ways our bodies react to illness, times of day, or even the weather (Adam, 2004; Bryson, 2007; Knights, 2006). It is a puzzle how, within all these multiple, simultaneous, rhythmic, cyclical, linear, momentary experiences of time that permeate our everyday lives without much thought, people somehow manage their relationships to time.

Bastian's survey of the interdisciplinary literature on time suggests that knowledge both within and between disciplines 'has not been adequately connected up and researchers have not been able to build on each other's insights easily' – and that 'the body of work is extremely diverse' (2014, pp.138-9). Researchers of time have made use of various methods to explore the ways in which individuals live in, and account for, their time.

Davies (1996) used timelines in her study of women who do paid work. Time-use diaries are popular methods (Chenu and Robinson, 2002; Cooke, 2007; Craig, 2007), including video and online blogging methods (Bartlett and Milligan, 2015), real-time methods that make use of smartphones and I-pads (Back, et al., 2013). The use of essay writing saw Crow and Lyon return to Sheppey to conduct an updated version of Ray Pahl's (1978) study which asked children to write about their future, as if an adult thinking back on their lives (Lyon and Crow, 2012). Goodwin and O'Connor (2015) also revisited data collected by Elias's research team on young people's expectations of their futures.

Scholars of time have researched temporalities of 'home-life' (Diprose, 2009; Finch and Mason, 1993; Gerstel, 2000; Hochschild, 1997, 2012), 'routine' (Silva, 2002), 'gender and politics' (Bryson, 2007; Felski, 2000; Holmes, 2002), 'identity' (Bastian, 2011; Felski, 2002, 2000b), and 'employment and labour' (Davies, 1990, 1996; Hochschild, 1997; Smart et al., 2004). There has been a growing interest in 'community and time' (Bastian, 2014; Crow and Heath, 2002; Gilchrist, 2012; Lyon and Crow, 2012; Ryan, 2008). Birth's study of cultural ideas of time allows an insight of co-operation and conflict within models of time in people's daily lives (1999, 2004). 'Speed' and 'fast-paced societies' have also become an area of scholarly interest (Bittman and Wajcman, 2000; Ryan, 2008; Smart et al., 2004; Wajcman, 2016). Other scholars have explored the concepts of leisure and 'past-times', exploring how these times are experienced and understood within people's lives (Knights, 2006; Roberts, 2002; Shercliff, 2009). The 'tempo and rhythm' of time examines how the repetitive nature of the everyday sits at odds with the linear understanding of time that 'drives' forward. Elias (1992) argues that time is a construction that people create and learn through symbols that arise out of a need for synchronized activity within the interconnectedness between individuals within societies. Daly discusses the temporal dimensions of pace, turn-taking, interpretation of past, and future events that are required for synchronised interaction (2002, p.324). McNeill (1995), similarly, drew attention to the practical objects that highlight not how

little synchronisation there is, but how much – given the enormous scope that exists for people to be out of step. More recently, studies on time use have included digital societies (to be discussed in section 4.4).

It is important therefore to ask ‘whose time is valued?’ when exploring how these conceptions of time fit when one works within a community of people. Is it the person who contributes more hours, or those who expend more energy? We do not wake up with the same amount of energy from one day to the next, so how can we realistically expect everyone to experience time at a similar scale or pace? Time plays a complex and wide-ranging role in social processes of belonging and interconnection, as well as understandings of legitimacy, agency, power and social change (Bastian, 2014; Bryson, 2007; Elias, 1992; Felski, 2000a; Greenhouse, 2014). Acknowledging how the processes of training, or how being a member of a community impacts our own personal change, personal relationships, and changing motivations for the societies in which we live may allow communities to make change at a pace that connects us all with our futures.

4.1.1 Power, agency and time

The invention of the watch gave more power and status to the powerful. Poorer people, with less chance of ever owning a watch, had much less opportunity to gain control over their own time. Today, almost all people in western societies carry watches or some type of time-keeping device allowing them to synchronise time with others. This standardisation of time not only allows us to synchronise our daily encounters, it also promotes moral ideas of punctuality and virtue in keeping ‘good’ time. Clock-time may give us the power to organize but paradoxically the more we fix and regulate our own time, the more time starts to control us: it can be both liberating and constraining. In addition to the synchronising and organising of our everyday events, concepts of time

are linked to the exercising of power and the structuring of political and social action (Birth, 2016; Fraenkel, 2018; Greenhouse, 1996).

Accounting for our time appears to have taken a hold on societies, both within personal and public realms. UK politics currently appear to be gripped by an interest of institutional and individual 'accounting for time': welfare benefit-recipient sanctioning for those not using their time correctly (Greenhouse, 2014; McKenzie, 2015), NHS penalties for not meeting waiting times (Shaw, 1994). Fraenkel (2018) draws upon this enforced lack of agency and time sovereignty to explore the struggles within homeless families in New York. The study also highlights how temporal rhythms and routines of family life are used as a means of resilience, resisting the linear time demands from government agencies that impact negatively on life within homeless families. Fraenkel describes the families as experiencing inordinate time pressures and scheduling challenges that result in 'frenetic, harried, time-starved lives' (2018, para. 3).

Within community, charitable, business, and even academic projects, pressure is often created by accounting frameworks: money that has to be spent by the end of the financial year or funding timelines that just don't seem well-designed for particular projects (Gilchrist, 2012, p.2). With regard to work and labour time, employees are often expected to account for all of their working day: completing daily timesheets so that their actual time is recorded against a project, or by logging into digital hour-trackers. Yet rarely is time allotted to the management of 'technological innovations' – such as email or phone calls, that supposedly increase efficiency and so speed up our lives (Diprose, 2009, p.146). Nor is time allocated to 'non-calculable moments' (Lefebvre, 2004) when one might bump into someone in the hallway, or perchance another staff member comes to ask for advice - those accidental 'meetings' where 'unpredictable and productive things invariably happen' (Diprose, 2009, p.146). Time for critical thinking is also rarely scheduled into our busy lives, yet somehow, all these activities are to take place – with

the result of them often 'seeping into other jurisdictions of time' in our lives; home, family, leisure time (Ibid, p.147).

A great deal of literature on 'work-life balance' presents a rather private/public dichotomy of home and family life versus work and leisure time, assuming a rather static model of the home as a fixed space in which family life is experienced. However, recent sociology and family research acknowledges family connections and intimate relationships across global borders (Ehrenreich and Hochschild, 2003) and the use of digital media to stay connected (Jamieson, 1998; Longhurst, 2013; Rakow and Navarro, 1993; Sawchuck and Crow, 2012). Morgan stresses that 'family practices are not necessarily practices that take place in time and space conventionally designated to do with 'family' that is in the home, rather families are actively constructed through day-to-day activities of their members, inducing places of work (Morgan, 1999, p.20 cited in Wajcman, 2016, p.142).

4.1.2 Feminising time and 'good enough'

The previously mentioned writers emphasise the importance of temporality for the understanding of social worlds, and argue that these should not be understood as static, but as interconnected dimensions of past, present and future which are constantly changing. While they all agree that change is ever-present and that the future possibilities are not always predetermined, few of them fully investigate the implications of their ideas with regard to gender. Many feminists have however taken these on board and questioned how their ideas can be modified in accordance with a female perspective (Bryson, 20012; Felski, 2000; Wajcman, 2016).

Feminists suggest that inequalities in time use are a key feature of male privilege and female disadvantage (Bryson, 2007; Davies, 1996; Dominelli, 1990; Grimshaw, 2011; Hochschild, 2012; Kramarae, 2001), with some arguing that traditional quantitative time-

use studies are positioned from a universal (male) perspective that divides the day into neat sections without taking into account the multiple 'times' that people live (Adam, 1990, 1995, 2004; Bryson, 2007), nor the non-calculable moments (Diprose, 2002; Lefebvre, 2004, 2008) that intersect our lives.

While recognising the many branches of feminist thought, the emancipatory focus of feminist work suggests a commitment to action for change, and understands the ever-changing experiences and relationships of the present, and the importance that the past plays on present action and hopes for better futures (Adam, 1990, 1995; Bryson, 2007). This chapter does not suggest that there are two distinct dichotomies of time such as male and female time: our experiences of time are inherently fragmented, fluid and multi-faceted. However, it does highlight the possibility that different physical and social experiences give women and men a different relationship to time. There are arguments that 'women's time' is embedded in the biological cycle of reproduction, family and relationships (Bryson, 2007; Kristeva, 1981), although this does tend to generalise all women's bodily experiences as universal, and overlooks that men are also embodied. However, the repetitive cyclical nature of (many) women's bodies, 'the personal calendar that exists outside "official" time, that women may use to plan and organise events' (Bryson, 2007, p.125) may suggest that these different temporal experiences are often neglected in dominant linear time structures.

A strong strand in many women's experience has been that women have traditionally worked in the home, the workplace and in the community, and have been apt at 'cheating' time: developing techniques of supposedly completing tasks early, multi-tasking or carrying out tasks for the next day in order to 'save time'. Inequalities in time-use have been highlighted within feminist research studies which have traditionally seen women bear the responsibility for domestic chores and care of the family, in addition to completing a full days paid work (Croft, et al., 2014; Doucet, 1995; Gerstel, 2000; Hochschild, 2012; Smart et al., 2004). Marxist theories claim that the foundation of social

organisation is production though labour. However, it is unsatisfactory when this 'equates only to the production of [paid] labour in the public sphere' (Bryson, 2012, p.110). Many feminists have argued that reproductive, care, and domestic work also play an important role within the realm of 'economic production' but have historically been overlooked.

Building on Hochschild's 'second shift', which explored women's 'two shift' day (Hochschild, 2012 [1989]), Gerstel's 'third shift' (2000) discusses not only the unpaid work that women do in the home but also the emotional and caring support given to others not of their household, including that within the voluntary sector. Hochschild brings attention to this in her discussions of 'altruistic surrender' (1978, p.100) where women often put the well-being of others before themselves, and which I will discuss later in this chapter. The recognition of unpaid work time can also be problematic depending on subjectivity. Demands for recognition for time spent caring for a sick or disabled family member or relative can often leave the cared-for individual feeling unrecognised or a burden to those whose time is taken up caring for them – again highlighting difficulties within how we explore 'whose time?' within communities. Kramarae takes Gerstel's theory further, exploring 'lifelong learning' in female students, and 'how they grapple with time constraints so they can unobtrusively squeeze distance learning into their already packed work and family lives' (Kramarae, 2001, p.3). Whether there is a trend toward equality within the realm of time use in the home is something still under deliberation, but Croft et al.'s (2014) study on the negative effect on female children's future aspiration from inequalities of household domestic chores would suggest that these inequalities continue to exist – and that women's extra contributions in the home are not always fully recognised by all family members and policy makers. Park et al. (2010) also raise awareness of this by revealing undergraduate students' associations of 'dad' with 'work' and 'mum' with 'home. If this extra work that women are carrying out is not being fully recognised then we have to ask why – especially

within the UK's current landscapes where gender equality is a political issue (Wood, 2014). It may be that these types of domestic labour are 'bitty' (a bit here and there), or as suggested earlier, we view unpaid work time differently from 'professional time' (Knights, 2006). It could also be asked that if work of this kind goes unrecognised, is it (still) down to a historical lag of continued and accepted norms of gender expectations. Ken Dempsey's (1990) study argues that much unpaid work to keep community relations going is done by women, and is more behind the scenes than formal membership of voluntary organizations' committees. If this is so, it would suggest that women who contribute to causes such as women's football appear more visible due to being seen as disrupting these norms. A report by Messner and Cooky (2010) discussing the very low profile of women's sports in the media might argue otherwise.

Recognising the multiple times we live leads onto the issue of prioritising time - exploring how women who volunteer or take part in community causes prioritise their time, and how they do this without the emotional turmoil of perhaps letting others down, or being faced with burn out (Bakker et al., 2002). Research findings discussing how women often feel selfish for focusing on their own needs rather than those of others (Silva, 1996) raise questions within the field of community/voluntary work when women choose to spend time, perhaps away from their own families and friends with the aim of contributing to their wider communities. Acknowledging that they cannot be 'everywhere at once' is something that volunteers must learn if they are successfully to manage their time and their well-being, but realising this fact may take time, as may the related acceptance that contributions made may not be perfect but are 'good enough'.

4.2 Time and process in the community

Time and community are rooted in one another. Social connectedness has an effect on individual well-being, and feelings of belonging are connected to social relationships.

Belonging is connected to time, self and community (Bastian, 2014; V. May, 2016a) and, therefore, to social relationships and well-being. There are varied and wide general understandings of 'community' from being thought of as local space where people interact (Dominelli, 1990), socio-historical constructions arising through disciplines of shared body memory (Connerton, 1989), a field that "constitutes our experiences in common' (Diprose, 2002 p.167), but for the purposes of this study, 'community' is understood to be the ties that individuals have because of shared experiences, associations and interest (Crow and Allan, 1994). This may include political ideologies, place or leisure interests. What is appealing about communities is their 'certainty', their quite conventional underpinning of fixedness and familiarity. It's not so much about change, but about knowing that if something goes wrong, you have someone you can call on to fix it: the collective self-reliance, so to speak. In some ways, what is attractive is the status quo, and so people are often (understandably) resistant to change because community politics and community development are framed as the pursuit of change and not continuity. Whether this is with regard to communities of place, interest, workspace or learning, it is this status quo that often allows members to feel safe. Paradoxically, communities are also about a process of change: changes that maybe unforeseen, but also changes in communities which are, as suggested by Rothenbuhler, 'social accomplishments..... rather than the myth of commonality that makes them appear to generate spontaneously' (2001, p.165). It is, then, through always already being with others in communities, that we are able to make sense of our world and understand the complexities of information. Through discussion and interaction, we are able to break down information and understand it. Working things out in communities of peers with mutual concerns, interests *and* differences is how individuals try out their ideas and get reactions to them.

However, we often hear talk about community as if it is a thing, rather than a collection of people with similarities, and differences. If we think of all the people that we meet,

the people who have inspired us, scolded us, propped us up, motivated and encouraged us: all the people that we have met who have challenged us to shift the paradigms of our thinking, and who have changed us, we can begin to understand the process of the interconnections between people in communities. Elias's broad analysis of social change treated communities as social units shaped by forces at the macro level. This argument was that communities develop 'in the slipstream of changes of the larger units' such as state formation and society-wide differentiation of roles. The general pattern involved movement away from all-embracing networks of local interconnections toward 'lengthening of the chains of interdependencies'. In discussing this process whereby the 'structure and pattern of interdependencies between people who have their homes in the same locality change with the development of societies, Elias paid particular attention to the uneven effect on women and men. Opportunities in the wider public sphere were greater for men, while in women's lives 'The dominance of private and personal concerns.... was noticeably stronger' (Elias, 1974, pp.xxxiv, xxi, xx). Nevertheless, Elias's premise that every individual is part of a figuration of social relationships, that 'There is no one who is not and has never been interwoven into a network of people' (1978, p.128), did not imply that everyone was equally interconnected, nor that people in networks were equivalent, although he left it to others to explore in detail the gender dimensions of this.

The gendered aspects of time in the community are important for exploring how past community configurations continue to exercise an influence on gendered social relations in the present. Elias's starting premise for the gendered aspects of community theory was that every individual is part of a figuration of social relationships. Moreover, these figurations have a history, and people are socialised into that history.

Elias's ideas also prompt three possible explanations of community's gendered character. These draw upon his thinking about long-term social processes, his notion of the 'we-I balance' (Elias, 2001), and his ideas about self-restraint and detachment. Past

ways of thinking and behaviour being carried on by succeeding generations explored in *The Civilising Process* (Elias, 2000[1939]) were revisited by Elias and Scotson (1994) through the idea of actions being shaped by tradition. Elias's *Essay On Time* revisited this theme with the observation that 'individuals learn to understand the time signals customary in their society and to regulate their behaviour by them' (Elias, 1992, p.13), but his other writings open up the possibility that the reproduction of tradition can be modified by changing patterns of constraint and of the balance between the individual and the collectivity.

4.2.1 Gendered characteristics of community

The gendered characteristics of time discussed in the previous section surely leads us to community as also having gendered characteristics, which has been a theme in numerous community studies (Crow, 2018). Women's centrality to informal community relationships has been amply demonstrated (Grimshaw, 2011; Jupp, 2012, 2014; Naples, 1998) but not adequately explained. This is all the more curious because formal community organizations are consistently reported to be male-dominated (Charles et al., 2008, p.199).

Feminists have challenged conventional understandings of community because of the assumptions that they make that render women's contributions invisible (Grimshaw, 2011; Jupp, 2012, 2014; Stall and Stoecker, 1998). Questions about women's visibility in the community have been raised by several scholars (Crow, 1999; Elias and Scotson, 1994; Jupp, 2012, 2014; Smith, 1987; Williams, 1997), and hidden aspects of the time and voluntary work of women is of continued interest within this project. Researchers report consistently that women's involvement in informal community relationships is greater (even if more hidden) than men's. This pattern of neighbourhood social life has been found over time, in rural, urban and suburban settings, in various countries, and by

researchers using diverse approaches. Young and Willmott's key message in their 1957 study was that East London's informal social life revolved around adult women and their mothers and other female neighbours. More recently, Putnam noted 'more informal socializing among women' (2001, p.185) while Charles and her colleagues concluded that in Swansea 'it is largely women's networks which hold families and communities together' (2008, p.209). The other side of the coin is men's more tenuous involvement, from Bennett Berger's description of a working-class American suburb as 'manless during the day' (1968, p.6) to Lisa McKenzie's Nottingham estate characterised by 'missing men' (2015. ch.3) and Wajcman's discussion of virtual networks that are gendered (2016).

Recognising that the activist work of many women of colour, women from working-class or poor backgrounds and differently-abled women have often been left out of historical content (Bornat, 1997; Gluck, 1998; hooks, 2000; Naples, 1998) helps to acknowledge that many women's issues could be recognised as 'community issues', especially within marginalised groups of women whose concerns directly relate to issues within the community (Crow and Allan, 1994; Gluck, 1998; Grimshaw, 2011; Naples, 1998). Exploring the language around 'volunteering' and the status that groups often require to get themselves noticed will be picked up later in this thesis, but with regard to women and community engagement, Grimshaw (2011) highlights New Labour's (1997-2010) policies on active citizen involvement, and the transfer of power to communities which overlooked the issue of gender, and promoted the idea of community as an "homogeneous group of people living in the same geographical area" (2011, p.2). The community has often been a place where many women have situated their 'collectives', however, this does not imply that women's place in the community, or community engagement is always positive (Beebeejaun and Grimshaw, 2010; Gosling, 2008; Williams, 1997). Grimshaw (2011, p.7) highlights how women, being the ones who are most often *in* the community, see the things that are wrong with their surroundings, and who deal with the problems, and

Gosling (2008) indicates that some women's life experiences, or the barriers they face are not always acknowledged within community projects. Equality in domestic and public life is still an uphill battle for many women: one only has to look toward any 'violence against women' statistics to be reminded of that (Chalaby and Holder, 2013; Mlambo-Ngcuka, 2015), and within the realm of community activism, the experiences of women are often rife with difficulty (Hyatt, 2004; Shaw, 1993; Spence and Stephenson, 2007).

Ruth Finnegan's 'hidden musicians' study describes ways in which community participants are easily overlooked or hidden, not through deliberate means, but because they were not "always clearly known to outsiders" (1989, p.306). This type of non-deliberate concealment is vastly different from organisations which have to take quite deliberate steps to keep their members 'hidden', or even individuals who wish to keep a low profile (Grimshaw, 2011). 'Greater visibility can come at a price... It can engender tensions and conflicts' (Rosanvallon, 1988, p.211). While this statement was made in the context of a 'totally visible society' (Crow, 1999, p.9) it could certainly be applied today in threats of violence that often face female campaigners, especially within the context of social media and online forms of campaign work (Fascendini and Fialová, 2011; Pew Research Center, 2014)². These forms of violence highlight ways in which women have to find alternative modes of campaigning: shifting trajectories to suit their goals within changing social landscapes. It is not uncommon for female activist groups and voluntary organisations to continue to be 'women only, or held within 'hidden' online social media groups, as means to keep their members safe from potential harm.

These types of concealment could be argued as sitting in opposition to 'making gender visible' (Acker, 1989). However, while individual identities may be hidden, and their group

² (Michota, 2013) also explores this concern within female entrepreneurs.

meetings 'women only', their projects may be highly visible. As will be shown below, Rape Crisis volunteer workers often have 'hidden' social media support groups where they can chat and offer support to one another, and Women for Independence provide 'women-only' workshops and training events. While both organisations are very vocal as a whole, the problem is that work carried out by these female volunteer and activists often goes unnoticed. Similar to the hidden part of an iceberg, 'what you see is not often the full story' (Callaghan, 2011), and there is often a hive of activity going on in the background, hidden to outsiders (ibid). It may be that 'You can't be what you can't see' – a phrase that emerged from the film *'Miss Representation'* (Siebel Newsom, 2011) and now used as 'policy' by many feminist groups. However, there are also downsides to complete visibility.

Jenny Morris (1997) also raises this issues of 'invisibility' in her discussion of feminist research within the women/carers debate, and highlights an inability to see the disabled woman or women who need care equally with those who do the caring. Caiazza and Clevenger's study (2007) on female leadership within workers' unions highlights the difficulties of women trying to make inroads into leadership. While these examples are not directly related to this study, they do bring awareness to continued difficulties in gender visibility. Highlighting 'the weeks of work that make the day' (Callaghan, 2011) within community projects and organisations may be a pathway to not only recognising the work that women do, how they experience and envisage change and manage their time, but also of encouraging new members in, by allowing them to clearly understand different voluntary roles, and perhaps recognise where their own skills could be put to some use.

4.2.2. Elias and theories of gendered communities

'It is difficult to imagine communities without women and children, though one can imagine communities almost without men' (Elias and Scotson, 1994, pp.146–147).

We each add interpretations to our past experiences, and to that which we have been taught by others. We each bring something to the table, and while we each bring our own individuality, our sense of who we are changes through the relationships we form with others. These are not pre-planned changes and shifts. As communities, groups and societies shift and change, members impact upon other members in specific ways so that it all 'takes a course which has not been intended, or planned, by any individuals making it up' (Elias, 2001, p.7).

In Eliasian thinking, 'without the nexus of the other, none of us could be who we are' (Lawler, 2008, p.7). Elias's argument is that no individual 'stands outside of society....[as] a bounded self-contained individual' (Lawler, 2008, p.5). Put another way, others are central to the development of identity. Social relationships constitute a 'whole groundwork of interdependencies which bind people to each other'. The language of 'bonds' and of 'chains' (Elias, 1974, pp.xviii, xxvii) and elsewhere of 'traps' (Elias and Scotson 1965 p.23) conveyed that relationships are structural and cannot be changed simply by individual choice. In as far as we imagine others' perceptions of ourselves to be, we are also acting on these imaginings.

In western societies, the I-identity (individual) is often seen as more important than our We-identity (that which we have in common with one another). This is paradoxical as we would all agree that the rights of the individual are important in our understandings of a democratic society – and that it is important that we all have our beliefs and identities recognised. However, we are also encouraged to work together, to care for and support our each other in our communities and to act as one whole. Elias tells us that societies are not simply a cluster of individuals coming together to form a group, but instead the relationships between these individuals are what form what we know as society.

‘The impact of each other’s lives on each other and how these groups and interactions impact on each other changes individuals and societies and communities in specific ways – so that it has a history which takes a course which has not been planned, or intended, by any of the individuals making it or considered in isolation’ (Elias, 2001, pp.10-11)

Elias’s argument, that, in many contexts, the balance between the I/We can shift toward the ‘We’ due to sheer numbers of interrelated circumstances affecting a person, and has a gendered dimension that he left somewhat implicit.

Elias’s ideas prompt three possible explanations of community’s gendered character. He described how long-standing social relations are slow to change; they can survive the disappearance of their original foundations ‘for some time’, by which Elias meant decades. Elias paid particular attention to the uneven effect on women and men, and observed that opportunities in the wider public sphere were greater for men, while in women’s lives ‘The dominance of private and personal concerns.... was noticeably stronger’ with women being ‘more closely bonded by community ties’ (1974, pp.xx, xxvii). He believed that, as a result, women had greater involvement in community networks. Elias argued that the shift away from ‘predominantly agrarian communities’ saw the accentuation of the distinction between public and private spheres. It fell primarily on women to perform the private function of ‘handing on the basic orientation and skills of one generation to another, and with it the communal sense of identity’. Meeting community members’ ‘need for human bonds beyond the family level’ promotes social integration. People have a ‘need for company and good cheer, in familiar surroundings where they can feel at home’ and it is often women who ‘are more likely to become involved in the network of personal relationships’ in which ‘emotive undercurrents’ need to be managed. Elias noted that it

was among these networks that 'gossip circuits' (1974, pp.xx, xxi, xxvii, xxix, xxvii, xx) operated.

Gossip drove the circulation of praiseworthy and stigmatising information about community members. This appeared to give women a degree of power within communities, but it involved monitoring and safeguarding community standards, and greater 'susceptibility to the pressure of their 'we-group' (Elias, 1994) ensued. Elias recognised that community relationships involve 'power differentials' which held in 'almost all cases', and in consequence are 'unevenly reciprocal'. This has remained true of gender relations in communities despite erosion of the 'very pronounced patterns of dominance and subordination' characteristic of 'simpler societies'. Community relationships may have narrowed from being all-embracing to focussing on the more limited purview of informal sociability and 'private lives' (Elias, 1974), but gender inequalities persist.

Jocelyn Cornwell has argued that there are 'radical differences in the way people experience community and in what they know about it'. If she is correct that women occupy 'a much wider range of communal spaces' than men do, this could explain their 'much wider variety of contacts' (Cornwell, 1984, pp.49, 50), and through them more frequent reinforcement of Elias's 'we-identity' (Elias, 2001). The difference between Elias and feminist writers is that the latter tend to give women more agency than Elias does. Likewise, Charles and her colleagues highlighted the centrality of women's networks in their re-study of Swansea, but in doing so emphasised 'women's agency' (2008, p.203) in explaining both change and continuity.

4.2.3 The individual in the group – finding a (We-I) balance

How volunteers position themselves or identify within theories of collectivism and individualism may help us understand what motivates individuals (and sustains their motivation) within community engagement. There are arguments for and against each theory, collectivists believing that choice is never fully original, that we all learn from others, ask advice, share ideas, and within communities – discuss community related issues: that we are all products of our own social environment (Butler, 1990; Connerton, 1989; Goffman, 1986; Halbwachs, 1992), and individualists believing that while they may agree somewhat with these theories, they also believe that it is the individual self who makes the choice: that the individual mind grasps the concept in order to make the decision, or that each step within a community or group decision emerges from each individual within the group (Bell, 2013; Tuan, 2001).

The concept of the self as inherently social underpins many feminisms: acknowledging the social relationships and social construction of lived knowledge, and human community in creating and understanding both self-identity and the nature of meaning of the particulars of individual lives (De Beauvoir, 1997; Friedman, 2010; hooks, 2000). Women may be seen to have conflicting positions within the ‘collective’. On one side they often symbolise the collective ‘unity’ and underpinnings of specific projects. On the other, however, “they are often excluded from the collective ‘we’ of the body politic” (Beebeejaun and Grimshaw, 2010. p3). As touched on in other sections of this thesis, many women’s experiences of time, community, and volunteering are often so closely related to their immediate surroundings, that questions about identity, the body, and agency are often overlooked within the moment to moment practices of day-to-day life. While some may view individualism as problematic from the viewpoint of the group - in that a strong awareness that members variations of opinions and experiences may make the group foundation fragile, others appreciate these differences within group members,

acknowledge their experiences, and the fact that they might not agree on everything (Weiss, 1995). Also, referring back to my previous discussions on time, individualism and collectivism may be underpinned by different approaches to time. Recognising differences *and* connections among individuals, and the “networking and norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them” (Putnam, 2001, p.9) is essential in building a ‘common world’ (Tuan, 2001) that acknowledges the self within the social.

In various publications Elias argued that it was erroneous to treat individualization as the progressive reduction of social constraints to the point at which all that was left was the ‘we-less I’, elsewhere called the ‘I without we’, ‘the totally independent individual’, ‘the society-less person’, ‘the self-sufficient entity independent and cut off from other people and things’. What individualization involved was a shift in the nature of people’s constraints, a re-working of how ‘I’ relates to ‘we’, both of which remain potent symbols where people need to strike an appropriate balance between self-restraint and self-fulfilment’ (Elias, 1998, p.263). This in turn links to orientations to another aspect of time, the need for self-control if synchronised co-ordination is to be achieved. Elias had discussed in *The Civilising Process* how ‘people become accustomed to subordinating momentary inclinations to the overriding necessities of interdependence’, and his *An Essay on Time* (1992) revisited this theme with the observation that individuals learn to understand societal norms, values and expectations of time customary to their society. This ‘we-I balance’ holds a particular promise for understanding the gendered character of community relationships and time in the community.

Arlie Hochschild approaches this issue by making explicit its gendered character: she treats being ‘overly concerned with the needs of *others*’ as a gendered phenomenon, something producing in women an unhealthy ‘false self’ (1983, pp.195–196, emphasis in original) in which altruism and commitment to the good of the group is excessive. Hochschild treats families and communities as sites in which women practise ‘altruistic

surrender' (1978, p.100) by routinely putting others before themselves. There is a hidden cost attached to such behaviour where it extends to self-sacrifice (Gilligan, 1982).

4.2.4 Elias: gossip and restraint

Elias treated gossip as a key aspect of community life – highlighting its positive and negative bias (Elias and Scotson, 1994). The key mechanism for gossip was informal: gossip, known also as 'the community grapevine' (Elias, 1974, p.xxviii). Operating among both the established and outsider populations in his and Scotson's study, it took the form of 'praise-gossip', 'supporting gossip', 'blame-gossip' or 'rejecting-gossip' (Elias and Scotson, 1965, pp.92-3), and had the capacity to either enhance or tarnish reputations. It was most powerful where both groups internalised beliefs about the established group being naturally superior.

Some writers have discussed the practical value of gossip (Lewis, 1984; Tebbutt, 1995), while others comment on the gendered nature and description of gossip (McKenzie, 2015). While 'gossip' is often joked about in sexist, negative terms, gossip can also be a crucial part of communities - and can be seen as time spent with others that has importance in the relationships between community members. McKenzie (2015) questions whether male chat has the same negative connotations to it that women's gossip often has, and in sociological terms, we might question these connotations that imagines all 'gossip' as a waste of time. Shercliff (2009) highlights the value of places to chat in her study of women's crafts – while drawing on the need that women often have to be seen 'doing something' while chatting so that their conversations are not viewed as wasteful.

Some studies have promoted the positive impact of community gossip – considering it 'mutual aid' (Lewis, 1984, p.54). Others such as Tebbutt highlight the 'informal power' women get from gossip that and serves as 'a conduit for all sorts of useful information'.

There is a process in which gossip makes 'knowable' the community and its 'collective rhythm'. Tebbutt also argues that research into the gendered use of language is relevant to understanding everyday community interaction, and in particular the contrast between 'a self-centred tendency in men's talk' and 'women's gossip [which] is more outward-looking and focussed on the experiences of other people' (Tebbutt, 1995, pp.10, 75, 97, 14).

The idea that talk of collectivities promotes co-operation and downplays individuals provides an interesting point of potential dialogue with Elias analysis of the we-I balance, and the sexist assumptions that characterised Elias and Scotson's analysis of gossip are not reproduced in his analysis of how a balance between the I and the we is achieved.

4.2.4.1 Self-Restraint

Exercising self-restraint is important in the maintenance of claims to superiority and the reinforcement of 'specific emotional bonds' that allow privileged groups 'to stand together' (Elias and Scotson, 1994, pp.154, 155). Outsiders find less appeal in self-restraint according to other people's norms, particularly if they judge that their prospects of becoming accepted as 'civilised' remain open to doubt however hard they try to conform to established norms, simply because of their background. The theme of community and group relationships requiring self-restraint on the part of their participants was not fully-developed in Elias and Scotson's 'The Established and the Outsiders', although Elias did later revisit it. Without self-restraint, it would be impossible to achieve the 'we-I balance', a key aspect of group organization, not least synchronisation. Elias and Scotson treated the value attached to 'collective pride' as deep-rooted. This 'anchorage' of 'individual identity' (1994, p.105) in that of the group is influential. For people whose lives continue to be centred on their communities of origin, 'group identity' remains integral to their 'personal identity'. Their 'image as an

individual person' may be 'overshadowed' (Elias, 1994, pp. xliii, l) by a more powerful we-image. This is why collectivities such as communities endure as vital components in people's lives. Elias's explanations of social arrangements emphasised the enduring influence of historical legacies, and women's centrality to communities was no exception. Patterns from the past relating to the gendered split between public and private spheres would take time to loosen their grip. Psychological processes contribute to people's 'submission to group-specific norms, to patterns of affect restraint characteristic of that group' (1994, p.xlv) in which group members (and women in particular) place the group ahead of the individual – prioritising their We-identity over their I-identity.

4.3 Volunteering

Scholars, voluntary and third sector organisations have produced various accounts as to why individuals choose to volunteer or become active for a cause - from skill-sharing and personal development (Callender et al., 2016; Wilson, 2012), personal life experiences or dealing with life events (Campbell and Adams, 2009) and/or beliefs (Bussell and Forbes, 2002; Forbes and Zampelli, 2014), giving something back to the community (Gilchrist, 2009; Gladstone, 2013; Gronlünd et al., 2011; McCabe, et al., 2010; Ockenden and Hutin, 2008), the search for companionship, well-being and social cohesion (Bradley, 2003; Elliot, 2014; Gilchrist, 2009; Gladstone, 2013; Gronlünd et al., 2011; McCabe et al., 2010; Ockenden and Hutin, 2008; Wilson and Musick, 1997), or leadership skills (in small informal voluntary organisations) (Ockenden and Hutin, 2008). Researchers have also found that 'satisfaction with the work, social approval, and social rewards' are at times valued higher in voluntary work than in some types of paid employment (Bakker et al, 2002, p.3).

Volunteering is more than the element of 'free labour' that many definitions suggest. There is a complexity within the experiences, motivations, needs and expectations of volunteers, and the outcomes (of volunteering) relate both to the needs of those receiving help and benefit to the volunteers themselves (Lewis, 2013). Kelemen et al. build upon a classification of volunteering work as 'altruistic, militant and forced volunteering/'voluntolding'' (2017, p.1243). Lewis highlights controversies within definitions of volunteering, including 'mandated volunteering' ('voluntolding'), such as that found in students volunteering 'for credit toward graduation' or those who are required to volunteer through paid employment; those 'practising civil disobedience for a cause' (militant), or those who get some financial support for their work (2013, p. 2). While the free-will element of the volunteer may be debateable in some of these cases, she suggests that these should be included by drawing on Ellis and Campbell's definition of volunteering.

'To volunteer is to choose to act in recognition of a need, with an attitude of social responsibility and without concern for monetary profit, going beyond one's basic obligations' (Ellis and Campbell, 2005. p.4).

For the purposes of this study, I use the term 'volunteer' to mean those who participate within projects without remuneration, to bring benefit to themselves and/or others. These projects will not necessarily be framed explicitly in terms of 'helping others', and these individuals may not necessarily identify as volunteers, nevertheless, practices of 'helping others' fit with the definition of volunteering as identified by Ellis and Campbell (2005).

While the term 'volunteer' conjures up connotations of 'positive good' by many, volunteering can also be viewed as a pejorative term with volunteers being thought of in a less positive light (do-gooder, interferer, pushover) (Lewis, 2013). Some volunteers may

even avoid the term or underreport work, or label it as something different (board member, coach). Volunteers may be greatly admired by some, however, their work can also be undervalued precisely because it is done for free, and '[i]n a highly materialistic world devoted to the pursuit of economic gain, working for nothing is devalued, even stigmatized' (Musick and Wilson, 2008, p.86).

There are temporal elements to volunteering: long/short-term, and episodic. For example, that of disaster volunteering where people help out in times of crisis. While 'disaster volunteering' is initially spontaneous or episodic, Steffen and Fothergill's (2009) study found that it often leads to a 'more continuous engagement in volunteering activities' (Kelemen et al, 2017, p.1242). An example of this can be found in Nichols and Ralston's study which found volunteers 'reducing paid employment and increasing volunteering' (2011, p.909).

While all of these studies may tell us a great deal about practical reasons and rewards for volunteering, there is little that tells us about the temporalities involved, or what it is that encourages some people to take that initial step into participating with a cause. Rachel Howell's studies (2012, 2013, 2014), explore the formative experiences and influences that lead people to take action because of concern about climate change, which can involve semi-formal 'voluntary work' such as participating in an action group, or researching environmentally-friendly products. For some, it may be a way of 'escaping pressures of family life' (Crow and Heath, 2002, p.4; Hochschild, 2012), which might suggest that we do view 'times' (such as 'family time' and 'work time') differently.

The relationship between volunteers and the State is a contentious one. Voluntary organizations generally aim to supplement the role of the State but not to replace it, and this issue has become more acute in the context of austerity (Grimshaw, 2011; Jupp, 2014). Recent UK governments' attitudes to volunteering are based on a notion that there is an 'unlimited reservoir of goodwill in communities' (Kelemen et al., 2017, p. 1240) waiting to

be called upon to lend a hand (Cabinet Office, 2013). Rhetoric accusing poverty-stricken UK citizens of financial mismanagement, or that the increasing use of food banks demonstrates supply-led demand (a sense of 'build it and they will come'), is questionable. David Cameron, former UK Prime Minister, stated that the existence of UK charitable food banks was a positive example of a Big Society, and evidence of society's willingness to care for one another (Parliament, UK, 2012). This premise seems to position certain charities and types of volunteering as alternatives to state action (Hyatt, 2001; Jupp, 2014), and not as a result of destructive social policies. While governments may suggest that the need for charitable organisations and/or community action often sit outside of their jurisdiction, it is frequently politics that motivate citizens into action.

4.3.1 What counts as volunteering?

There are various definitions of volunteering. Tilly and Tilly define volunteer work as 'unpaid work provided to parties to whom the worker owes no contractual, familial, or friendship obligations' (Tilly and Tilly, 1994, p. 291). Wilson and Musick expand on this to also include 'informal ways of helping out, such as running errands for neighbours' which they describe as being done primarily by women, often with little recognition (1997, p.694). McMillan might be more accurate with her suggestion that 'there is no single definition of a volunteer, nor is there a single definition or understanding of what it means to volunteer' (2004, p. 127). While Gronlünd et al. (2011) and Wilson and Musick (1997) suggest that socioeconomic statuses, availability of people, and the promotion of well-being may be behind volunteering and altruistic motives for volunteering, the majority of research into volunteering and activism appears to focus on larger organisations or 'formal volunteerism' (Gronlünd et al., 2011). While fewer in number, studies have been conducted on volunteer work within small, 'below-the-radar' (BTR) groups (Jupp, 2012; McCabe et al, 2010; Ockenden and Hutin, 2008).

It is important when studying volunteering not to overlook small community-led projects. On one hand there are concerns about breakdowns of communities and a decline in civil society (Putnam, 2001), simultaneously there is an emphasis on the development of small community-based groups as having a positive effect on health and social well-being (Benenson and Stagg, 2016; Conley, 2005; Moseley, 2009; Shrestha and Cihlar, 2004; Sundeen, et al., 2007). Nevertheless, there is more we can learn about the impact BTR organisations given their low profile and lack of official status. Groups may desire to remain unknown to authorities or policy-makers and go about their activities, charitable events and community work entirely independent of any external advice, input or funding. Within the concept of hidden work or BTR organisations, there is value in exploring the assumptions we have about doing things 'officially', and how these assumptions play within our notions of 'doing things properly'.

The 'dichotomy of paid employment that takes place in the public sphere' (and is often associated with men) and unpaid work that is linked to the private sphere and is associated 'mostly with the domestic work done by women is based on a managerial understanding' of what counts as work (Kelemen, et al., 2017, p.1240; Taylor, 2004). Volunteering is often overshadowed by this dichotomy of paid employment/domestic work and deemed less interesting than either (Kelemen et al., 2017; Wilson and Musick, 1997). Kelemen et al. highlight the value of teasing out the boundaries of what is understood as 'work' to include volunteering. Their study demonstrates how 'altruistic, instrumental, militant volunteering and forced/ 'voluntolding' can co-exist at various points in time', highlighting the ways in which ideas of volunteering develop over time - serving 'both individual and collective purposes' (2017, p.1252).

Earlier studies of voluntary practices and community and civic engagements suggest that those who live in wealthier neighbourhoods and who are economically advantaged may be more inclined to participate in certain types of local and civic engagement (Wilson and Musick, 1997; Ziersch, et al., 2011). Wilson and Musick argue that formal

volunteering and informal helping are reciprocally related but connected in different ways to different forms of social capital. They note that those with higher incomes are 'three times more likely to be asked to volunteer than are poor individuals' (p.698) highlighting how certain forms of human, social and cultural capital affect an individual's ability or wish to participate in voluntary practices. Benenson and Stagg's (2015) study expands on this, exploring the potential benefits of volunteering for low-income individuals offering an 'asset-based approach' to volunteerism research through an examination of four non-financial assets: social, human, cultural and political capital. Relatively few studies take into account the practicalities of volunteering or the relationships between the members of groups. There are many studies highlighting why people get involved in volunteering and activism – formally and informally and the benefits of participating. There are fewer which explore the differences between local participation, or the practicalities around participating, including the everyday barriers that prevent people from participation. In addition to noting the disparities in recruitment, insufficient infrastructure and resources for low income volunteers, Benenson and Stagg also draw attention to the limiting factors of what 'counts' as volunteering and which often excludes the 'rich legacy of informal helping and mutual aid that sustains well-being in many marginalized communities' (2016, p. 133). Certainly, research highlights voluntary activities that are not always recognized as volunteering (even by volunteers themselves), including helping neighbours (Conley, 2005; Shrestha and Cihlar, 2004), and care work (Gerstel, 2000). These areas of community participation that fall outside of traditional understandings of 'volunteering' may devalue the contributions of individuals engaging in informal 'below the radar activities', and the language around volunteering may then be both limited and limiting in its ability to capture the full scope of voluntary activities in communities.

There is value in exploring the relationships between the members of informal groups, and how these relationships aid or prevent the extended life course of projects, or the

democratic nature of groups. The report by McCabe et al. drew on Ockenden and Hutin's (2008) study, which found that small informal groups were often led by a 'figurehead', but otherwise structures varied considerably. Group 'figureheads' often demonstrated 'high levels of involvement, commitment and passion' and groups were inclined to function informally, with a blurring of 'life inside and outside the group' and with group activities closely connected to the social and family life of members (McCabe et al., 2010, pp.10–11).

4.3.2 Gender balance

Volunteering is often understood as having a gender balance within formal third sector organisations, but informal types of civic engagement, which are more difficult to account for due to their 'hidden', 'below the radar' (BTR) (McCabe et al., 2010) nature, is predominantly carried out by women, especially within local community types of volunteering. This may have previously been understood as being down to fewer women being in employment, however, given the increase of women in the workforce, and studies of male and female leisure time (Roberts, 2002), the idea of women's volunteering being underpinned by a greater disposable time nowadays seems rather unconvincing.

While some studies of leisure activities (Roberts, 2002) and formal and informal volunteering (Wilson and Musick, 1997) suggest a gender balance among those who work full-time and engage in leisure and volunteering activities, Roberts' study revealed that women who worked in part-time employment engaged far less in leisure activities than men. Other studies have revealed that women often engage more in volunteering and local activism (Dominelli, 1990; Grimshaw, 2011), and that community relations are gendered (Crow and Allan, 1994; Dominelli, 1990; Elias and Scotson, 1994; Grimshaw,

2011). There also appears to be little decline in women's civic activities as the number of women in paid work rises (Richards, 1990).

There is a general understanding that women work (paid and unpaid) longer hours than men (Croft et al., 2014; Hochschild, 2012). This inequality of time might suggest a certain lack of 'time sovereignty' (Roberts, 2002) for women: the ability to allocate one's own time. Scholars have discussed the use of women's time as different from the use of men's time: women's time being used more often by others in their lives (Davies, 1990). It may also be that women are socialised to be more concerned about the sorts of issues that require volunteer activity, or that they are more aware of certain problems because they suffer more directly because of them. One might also ask if there are expectations of women, as care givers and nurturers, to 'help' in their communities (Argyle, 1991; Gallagher, 1994).

It has been noted in many studies of time poverty, that women's time is unequal to male partners' time, so it may be surprising to note that Wilson and Musick's study suggested that women with children under fifteen at home were more inclined to formal volunteering. While the study noted that the women in the study were less well educated and living in households with lower income (both indicators of being less likely to volunteer), they were 'more likely to have children living with them, visit and talk with friends.....and believe the good life demands assisting others—all factors conducive to volunteering' (1997, p.706). The study also noted that women reported 'helping out' at a greater level than men do. It might be argued that women help out informally more than men do because this type of informal volunteering is 'bitty' and can be slotted into women's often very busy lives, 'depend[ing] on their ability to meet the demand' (ibid., p. 700). However, it might also be evidence of the everyday saying 'If you want something done, ask a busy person'. This saying may be paradoxical, but thinking it through one can see some sense in it, because busy people have the capacity to find or make time to do things (although of course that must have limits).

With regard to informal types of volunteering (that are often difficult to gather data on), women may be more likely to run cake stalls to raise money for local community projects, while men are more often found in more formal types of voluntary roles: standing for election as board members of co-operatives and charities, and while these are generally not paid, they are more likely to come with expenses, and have higher status, than the cake stall work. Wilson and Musick's (1997) study supports this with their findings of more women 'helping out'.

Similar to life changing moments that may act as catalysts for participation in voluntary work or activism (Black and Dinitto, 1994; Campbell and Adams, 2009; Gladstone, 2013), situations that individuals find themselves in can also result in them becoming deeply engaged with causes (Dominelli, 1990; Hyatt, 2001, 2004; Shragge, 2013). Many studies have shown the role that women have played in changing social conditions for their families and wider communities (Dominelli, 1990; Hyatt, 2004; Jupp, 2014; Shaw, 1993; Spence and Stephenson, 2007). Lister draws on Hyatt in her discussion of 'accidental activism', which Hyatt describes as a process through which 'women who previously did not see themselves as in any way political are becoming activists for social change' (Lister, 2003, p.6). Lister adds that in doing so, they 'politicised motherhood and subverted the boundaries and meanings of the public/private divide' (Lister, 2003, p.148). For example, a group of mothers in the north of England became actively engaged in ongoing protest with a local authority over water rates in the 1990's (Hyatt, 2004). The local women protested against the costs of water charges and threats of a denial of water in the event of unpaid charges. These women did not start out as 'activists' and much of their initial active engagement began with low-key activities or meetings in each other's homes.

Groups and organisations that position themselves within feminist political discourse, do so with an awareness that they are 'neither entirely free agents nor the passive victims of circumstances' (Bryson, 2007, p.99) and that their future goals must think beyond what currently exists in the present while acknowledging both the past, and new possibilities

that are continuously developing in a 'never static' present. (ibid, p.100). Adam argues for this temporal understanding from feminists, so that they can 'genuinely connect.....the influence of the past, the visions and interest of the future and the constitution of the present, without losing sight of social relations to power' (Adam, 1989, p. 463). Female activists and volunteers associated with causes for change are often apt at thinking and planning ahead to 'futures yet unthought' (Bryson, 2007; Grosz, 1999). This kind of reasoning may bring their future visions into the present, imagining 'radically' different alternatives to current policies, structures and limitations, and continuously having to come up with new ideas for thinking ahead, or it can shift trajectories that groups-on-the-move require, quite possibly providing that 'something' that keeps volunteers motivated.

4.3.3 Negotiating time and volunteering

There are still under-researched areas that surround volunteering with regard to how we manage and prioritise the temporal dimensions of work (both paid and unpaid), and leisure, family and personal time, the language that surrounds volunteering/activist/altruistic practices, and third/state and private sectors. Exploring these 'loose and baggy' areas (Kendall and Knapp, 1995) is therefore crucial to improving our understanding of the temporal dimensions of community volunteering.

Investigating the ways that female volunteers manage and experience the various dimensions of temporalities may uncover how we perceive concerns about difference, lifestyle, power, and control within communities in relation to the temporal expectations and assumptions discussed earlier. In a similar vein to community, the concept of the everyday is contested and slippery (Elias, 1998a). To attempt to understand the everyday in relation to volunteering, Elias, (1998a, p.171) maintains that the everyday is 'the

sphere of the mundane', 'the life of the masses' and 'private life (family, love, children) as opposed to public or occupational life'. Jacobsen (2009, p.1) proposes everyday life as

'one of the most obvious arenas for researching and accessing a multitude of phenomena, processes and problems of social life because it is 'just there', it is accessible and it is something with which we are all familiar'.

It is here that I draw a link with Finch and Mason's study of 'negotiation' to try to explore how women negotiate these temporal and relational dimensions of their lives. Finch asks how one might work out a way that people negotiate 'the proper thing to do' (1989, p.142). Finch is engaging here with theoretical questions linked to Parsons' idea that there are a single set of values and then there are those who deviate from those values. However, Finch also argues that while there is a rough or broad consensus between everyone, these differ in detail according to age, gender, class, race and over time – and that we have to negotiate what these mean in our lives. In her later work with Mason (Finch and Mason, 1993) they explore negotiation within families, asking whether empirical research can confirm the abstract idea that we all have a shared set of values. Their discussions on implicit and explicit negotiations balance Elias's understandings of community relations in that 'it is never entirely open-ended and sometimes it can be quite constrained' (1993, p.60). Finch and Mason, and Elias have somewhat similar views in that women can be seen to actively work out their courses of action, doing so with reference to other people – family, friends, and workmates. It is through this interconnectedness and interaction that people develop a common understanding of what their particular course of action will mean.

4.4 Balancing digital time

Advances in mobile phone and digital technology have meant that our networks are always accessible. These systems tap into an essential human desire to connect, and the basic human need to feel part of a wider society – making the argument that digital connectivity is fundamentally social in the way in which it mirrors society – and may be understood as an updated version of the older idea of people being a part of a system – similar to Elias and Scotson's (1994) community. However unlike Elias's account of processes taking a great deal of time to change (even centuries), digital technology shows how quickly systems and processes can change.

4.4.1 Online communities

'Technology... presents a way to counter powerlessness by allowing individuals to propose new spaces, upon which newer, more empowering habits and relations may be cultivated.' (Papacharissi, 2010, p.15)

Papacharissi's quote highlights what is often understood as the democratising effect of online communication and as a vehicle of promoting a more democratic style of civic engagement and social connectedness. There are of course arguments to just how democratic digital technology is, or that in principle everyone has equal access, opportunity or skills to participate in our rapidly changing digital society (Dorling, 2015; Richardson, 2015). Sawchuk and Crow's study of grandparents' use of mobile phones discusses the 'tangled tensions between ageing', new digital technologies and 'the activities of inter-generational family life' by highlighting a digital divide within a 'desire for connection with grandchildren [which] became, for many, a key reason to "keep up" even with practices they did not feel comfortable with' (2012, pp.497, 503).

Rainie and Wellman's (2014), discussion of the benefits of online 'networked' communities investigates the rapidly increasing ubiquity of information and communication technologies (ICTs), and the ways in which they are shaping how people learn, work, communicate, and form relationships with one another. The social nature of online communication is explored comprehensively by boyd (2014) in her study of teenage use of social media. boyd proposes that 'more often than not, [their] passion for social media stems from a desire to socialise'. Her findings, while perhaps somewhat optimistic, suggest that 'most teens aren't addicted to social media; if anything, they're addicted to each other' (boyd, 2014, pp.22, 80). boyd's earlier discussions on 'networked publics', suggests that these are 'publics that are restructured by networked technologies', and adds that these offer 'many of the same functions as other types of publics' by providing platforms and spaces for people to meet for 'social, cultural and civic purposes' with a 'world beyond their close friends and family' (boyd, 2010, p. 39). While Turkle (2011) discusses fears about people immersing themselves in virtual worlds, isolating themselves from those physically around them, it is also acknowledged that the capacity for online digital connections to transcend space and time boundaries can be said to have contributed to the broadening of social connectivity across the globe (Hampton, 2009; Rainie and Wellman, 2014).

Online networks, while often invisible, are 'nevertheless important sources of sociability, information and social capital' (Rainie and Wellman, 2014, p.38). For women (and marginalised groups), these platforms often promote an accessibility to wider support networks, friendships, learning spaces and pathways to greater empowerment (Loiseau and Nowacka, 2015) by providing spaces where a sense of trust and relationships can be formed, along with a 'shared sense of who 'we' are', as 'people from multiple locations gather synchronously or asynchronously to discuss shared interests or hang out' (Baym, 2015, pp.96 [author's emphasis], 81). Hornsby's (2005) study of on-line communities

also emphasises their collective character, including the ways that they operate using 'rules' to maintain group norms about appropriate behaviour on-line.

4.4.2 Online activism

Social media and online networking platforms have proved to be powerful tools raising awareness of and drawing attention to a plethora of social issues. The global reach of such vehicles stimulates discussion and action around the world and encourages policy makers to step up commitments at times. Recent political referendums in the UK, Scotland, and Ireland have witnessed the use of digital online networking as a means of galvanising action on the streets and voting booths. Similar to women in previous eras who did not start out as 'activists' and found that much of their initial active engagement began with low-key activities or meetings in each other's homes, female activists today increasingly meet online and very quickly share information across the internet highway. Loiseau and Nowacka's report found that social media has enabled women's political activism - bringing women's issues to the forefront of political agendas, mobilising networks of women and publics, through connection, skills and training. Their study highlights the power of digital communication technologies to 'increase the visibility of issues that are under-reported in mainstream media', however they also found that 'barriers to women's political agency are replicated in women's online activism' (2015, pp.2,3).

4.4.3 Safe spaces

Historically, women have been victims of threats and violent backlash from pockets of society during campaigns for more gender equal societies, and in more recent time, this

has become especially troublesome within online public spaces. Online and social networking groups are more recently inclined to opt for 'secret' groups to ensure safety among their members. Platforms are set up to create spaces for women to exchange knowledge and share 'information on their rights, legal processes and welfare services' (Loiseau and Nowacka, 2015. p2). Experiences of sexual harassment can be anonymously reported via mobile phone by using 'mapping' tools (Grove, 2015), and new online initiatives are being designed that record domestic abuse without any content being saved on the device itself– and which can store data until one is able to reach out for help (Hestia, 2018). 'Women only', or 'safe' spaces allow their members an active means of discussion and deep reflection, challenging and strengthening one's own understandings while also taking part in shared meanings across varied contexts (Shafiry-Funk, 2008). However when women are encouraged to take up certain strategies to prevent harassment, these strategies (such as monitoring and modifying one's own behaviour and attire, or ensuring one is not alone) often involve 'symbolic dependency and incompetence' (Gardner, 1995, p.17).

4.4.4 Endlessly on the phone

The breaking down of temporal and spatial boundaries associated with new communication technology has shifted the telephone call from being directed to a building (via landline) to the individual by means of personal cell-phone - no matter where they are. These advances have meant that our networks are always accessible to us (provided there is a signal or Wi-Fi connection), and ourselves to others (and systems). This normalisation of constant connection has created expectations of always being available to others - which can ultimately result in individuals feeling constrained by pressures of time and availability. Despite also offering greater agency in being able to make choices around work-times and flexibility (working-on-the-go), the perpetual

knowledge that one is always contactable can be said to result in feeling that one is never completely 'off-shift': On the plus side, we can keep significant others up to date with our situation, but on the down side we are potentially always 'on call' and thus lose some of the benefits of 'me time', that is, that time when we are answerable only to ourselves (2016; also Lim, 2014; Ling, 2008). Employers use phones to contact workers at short notice – a behaviour most noticeable by the increase in zero-hours contracts. Digital communication changes the nature of interaction and connectedness - no longer are the days when you could refuse a call by asking another household member to answer and say one wasn't at home. Wajcman however argues that phones are not so much just 'extending work technology' they are also increasing social bonds between individual and families, and that 'something other than the mobile phone is extending work time hours' (2016, pp.141, 143). In contrast to Lim (2014) and Tacchi et al. (2012), who highlight the constraining nature of mobile phones in women's lives, Wajcman argues that in providing opportunity to 'manage' family concerns during the working day, the mobile phone may be 'deployed to reduce time pressures' (2016, p.144).

The expectations surrounding women's roles in society, as mothers, sisters, partners, friends, and as independent individuals, are as liberating as they are constraining – and this can be 'witnessed in women's use of mobile media as they strive to fulfil both family and professional obligations' (Lim, 2014, p.357). With regard to domestic labour, women also use their phones to project manage other members of the household's tasks, in what Lim calls 'micro-coordination of family schedules and general household management'. Previous notions of women gossiping on the phone are now being challenged by recent studies that suggest that women's use of the mobile or smart phone is centred around "the constant updating and synchronisation of schedules among all family members" (ibid, pp.357, 358). It is synchronisation within families that can help to 'make' time for volunteering.

4.4.5 Digital pressure in the home

It is not only digital communication technology that has increased pressure on women's time (Lim, 2014; Rakow and Navarro, 1993). Increasing energy demands are seeing new technological innovations aimed at shifting patterns of behaviour and energy time use attached to the home. People's behaviour in the home has changed drastically over recent decades. Developments in domestic technology, created to 'save time' (although it has been found that these rarely reduce women's unpaid working time - and have paradoxically increased their domestic labour (Bittman et al., 2004), have not only changed how we use energy in our homes, but have shaped the patterns and practices of hygiene, comfort and convenience linked to our homes. So while the aim of labour saving devices may have been to save time on individual domestic chores and tasks, these technologies have increased our energy usage by changing the patterns, frequency and practices of how we live. Some research has even shown an increase in time spent on home-related tasks (Bittman et al., 2004; Shove, 2003; Wajcman, 2016), with both men and women showing an increase of time spent on tasks such as gardening, laundry, dishwashing – all while using labour-saving devices to tackle these chores. Kitchens and bathrooms have become the hotspots of consumption reflecting changes in the way people behave at home. Expectations of comfort, cleanliness and convenience have altered drastically over the past few generations – and we quite quickly become accustomed to the new technologies'. While 'the technologies involved [such as] the bath and the shower – have hardly changed at all over hundreds of years...patterns and logics of use are continually on the move' (Shove, 2003 p90). The potential to view the (daily) power-shower as efficient fits with our current preoccupation with saving time. 'Associated with speed, immediacy and convenience', it may not be inherently quicker than a bath', it does however fit with our 'current preoccupation with saving time' (Wajcman, 2016, p.121).

The time-shifting properties of technologies designed to allow 'time-saving' by setting device timers during periods of 'intense busyness in order to generate and protect pockets of time' (ibid) are often publicised as helpful to busy women. However, these devices require planning and organising and can result in a 'feedback loop where they paradoxically increase problems of scheduling, exacerbating the sense of hurriedness' (Wajcman, 2016, p.121); 'more gadgets generate more rush' (Shove, 2003. p 182).

The use of, or calibration to, 'available energy' also carries a risk of increasing problems of scheduling – resulting in an ever-increasing 'rushed' society. The idea of 'availability' as legitimate, and sustaining specific forms of consumption, is illuminating. However, it may underestimate the countless pressures experienced by those most responsible for energy consumption related to domestic forms of labour. Given that women's labour still accounts for two-thirds of total time spent on household chores (Kan et al., 2011) - (see also, Bryson, 2007; Davies, 1990, 1996; Hochschild, 1997, 2012)– not including time spent on 'project management' or overseeing other household members' chores, the added pressure that may be associated with further scheduling of tasks, may ultimately, and unfairly fall on women in the home.

The constant connectivity derived from digital communication technology taps into the fundamental human desire to connect to others, and to feel part of a wider society. It may be viewed as an updated version of Elias's observation that people have a 'need for company and good cheer' – although he did position this within familiar surroundings (1974, p.xxix). However, it prompts the argument of digital connectivity as essentially social in the way in which it reflects society. While empowering and providing greater agency in some contexts, mobile and digital communications, and domestic technologies, also draw attention to - and reinforce underlying gendered inequalities and constraints. It is, then, the ways in which human beings negotiate the boundless possibilities of digital technologies that determines their impact on society and their ability to connect and constrain people

4.5 Chapter Summary

The sociology of time has shown that time is more complex than linear progression. This is because on closer inspection time turns out to have several facets: some processes are linear while others are rhythmical or even cyclical (like the seasons). Furthermore, some processes are rapid while others are slow - so some accounts of change, like Elias's, emphasise the drag of history's legacy (2001), while others show how quickly things can alter, as I have highlighted in the section on digital technologies. There is also an important point about how people's perceptions of time vary: at the same event one person can find time drags while for another it flies by. Lefebvre (1987, 2004) and others also raise the point that people do not always perceive all aspects of time: the unnoticed rhythmical character of much everyday life, or Zerubavel's 'hidden rhythms' (1981). There are also dilemmas around whose time is important, especially within groups of people – and who gets to make decisions about time, or who has to adjust to whose time? In sum, the question of how people 'find' or 'make' time for volunteering turns out to be a complex one.

Within the realm of 'community' processes, writers often position the group as stronger than the individual: the individual member of the group has strong pressures to conform to the will of the group. Elias's interpretation of community, for example, is that people are 'kept in line' by forces like shame and the policing effect of gossip. Elias went on to develop this further in his discussion of individualization and the we-I balance, which is a key concept in this thesis. Building on this the literature on community focusses on both formal organization and more informal practices, and the core point here is that both of these are important. The literature also highlights that these roles are gendered, with women particularly undertaking the informal elements of 'community'. This is surprising in that it might be expected that this would become less marked as women take up paid work more (the feminization of the labour force), as women have other new demands on their time (e.g. grandparental responsibilities), and because women are not

'immune' from identity projects (i.e. the expectation to have their own identity, and not be simply X's wife, Y's mother and Z's daughter). A fourth change on the list is the changing communication environment associated with the rise of digital culture, not simply in the changes within communication, but also in the ways that ideas of 'community' are changing, and how people are negotiating their sense of self and group identity within this changing landscape. Elias's ideas about historical legacies take us only so far here and this needs to be supplemented by the concept of negotiation which gives people's agency greater recognition.

Some of the literature on volunteering does talk about motivations and what people are trying to achieve through volunteering, other volunteering literature flags structural constraints, and that the extent to which people are 'free' to volunteer is dependent on various things about the contexts of their lives. The literature highlights the ways in which volunteering is more accessible to those who are better-off financially, and with more privileged life-course positions. It is unsurprising that informal volunteering, which is often hidden within everyday practices of community, remains under-researched. Community projects may well be re-energising 'active citizens' and community spirited projects aiming to develop greater well-being amongst communities, but these visions of social cohesion often remain based on hierarchy and power associated with time.

This review of the literature supports the aim of this thesis to look at three very different community organizations that rely on 'volunteering' (even if the women who are involved in them don't define themselves as such). Understanding how volunteers experience time, and envisage and experience change; how their organisations understand non-official voluntary work, and within terms of funding cuts, how organisations are developing ways to fund themselves and where they are now positioned, should help to inform, and to develop better understanding of 'who's got time for that?'

The three case studies are different but volunteers in each of them face the common challenge of having enough time to devote to them, and that they have to find ways to achieve this. The literature suggests that they may do this by drawing on the support of the organization, on the support of family and friends, on inner resourcefulness, and on adaptability to the changing technological environment. These are the themes of the four substantive chapters to follow. The examination of my data will set out to explore the relative importance of each of these and also their interconnectedness (e.g. inner resourcefulness may be easier for people with supportive family and friends). The ambition of this research is that all non-profit organisations, regardless of size, will be able to benefit from the findings, and help them, their volunteers, and policy-makers better understand the everyday negotiations of women who volunteer.

5. Setting the scene

The fieldwork for this study was undertaken in three contexts: a Rape Crisis centre, a local branch of the Women for Independence organisation, and a line-dancing group to which I have given the pseudonym 'Tangled Rose'. Thirty-one women were participants in the study (see Appendix 1 for details); however, given the ethnographic nature of parts of the study, others were observed, including some of the grandchildren of the women from the dance group.

- Rape Crisis (RC)
- Women for Independence (WFI - a crowd-funded political activist group in Scotland (WFI, 2015)
- 'Tangled Rose' (TR) (pseudonym) (a small self-funded group of retirement-age line dancers, who support and raise awareness of community concerns through the use of pantomime.

By selecting three very different groups, consisting of women from various age groups and from different social, religious, and economic backgrounds, this study recognises the "different, multiple and shifting identities that women simultaneously hold" (Lister, 2003, p.4.). The three groups were chosen for the interesting comparisons they raise within the temporalities of 'episodic', 'long-term' and 'historic moment in time'. Episodic perhaps suggests a democratic group ethos, while also not demanding too much from members; 'historic moment in time' perhaps could be related to risks of quickly shifting trajectories which may be difficult for organisations to know what to do once the 'momentum' passes. Long-term organisations, while perhaps relatively secure, have to

move with changing social landscapes and be able to keep up with new members' perspectives and outlooks. The three different temporal dimensions also raise awareness of relationships of power and authority - highlighting differences in work ethics amongst the different groups – in that some may have firm ideas about being productive and making things happen all the time, whereas others may want to have some fun while still benefiting the wider community, all of which provides a really nice contrast by highlighting the different things that we seek from life, our communities and our voluntary work. The three groups were identified through the wider knowledge of the researcher: through personal affiliation (Rape Crisis), awareness during the Scottish Referendum (WFI), and through local knowledge (Tangled Rose).

Meetings were arranged and conducted with members/organisers/managers of the three groups, outlining the specifics and interests of the research. All groups gave verbal agreement to take part (participant information forms were later delivered to prospective individual participants). I would like to make clear at this point that I have a prior association with Rape Crisis, being a trained support worker for the organisation, training at the centre in the study, but volunteering at another centre – although I am not currently active as a volunteer. The impact that this may have within the research process will be explored further in this thesis within discussion of methodologies. I also have knowledge of the dance/pantomime group 'Tangled Rose' as my mother has been a member for over ten years. On embarking on the study, I had not previously met any of the members of WFI or Tangled Rose apart from my mother and the TR dance teacher, Gracie.

The study draws attention to the different types of activities and practices within the groups, and what may be learned from the ways these different types of community groups operate. While all three groups could very well be described as feminist groups, in that they offer practices which aim to create better societies and/or communities for women through their activities, activism, and spaces for social cohesion and friendship,

or through the ethos of their particular organisation, the members themselves may not identify with feminism at all. Some may not even have given the issue any thought. All, however, offer spaces where women feel welcome and are listened to, and where their democratic voices are heard within the group.

5.1 Group structure

While the various groups may have different goals or even understandings regarding the benefits of their work, all provide invaluable benefits to the wider community out-with the immediacy of the organisation or group. The volunteers relate to their groups through interesting temporalities as they negotiate the extent and pace of their involvement.

5.1.1 Registered Charity

The registered charity organisation chosen for this study is a Rape Crisis Centre in Scotland which covers a wide geographical area in Scotland and is affiliated to Rape Crisis Scotland. The organisational structure of the centre is based today on a managerial model more so than that of its historic past. From 1981 – 1991 the centre was volunteer-led and run. The centre remained volunteer-led, but with some paid staff, until 2006. As the nature of funding changed and funders became less likely to favour an organisation that did not have an accountable structure, a board of directors was created and a decision was made to move from the collective (volunteer-led) organisation to a managerial model. The centre still works on the ethos of women supporting other women, however it is much more formally run. Rape Crisis depends on local government and other external sources of funding to pay for its full-time staff, and to cover administrative, support and community-based prevention work. Since completing the

fieldwork at this organisation, the centre has expanded due to demand, widening their services, to take up another floor in the building in which it is accommodated.

There is no standard time which volunteers stay with the centre. Training takes place weekly, over six months and volunteers are asked to stay with the centre for one year. At the time of this study there were twelve paid staff, fourteen volunteers and ten trainee volunteers. The volunteer coordinator told me that the vast majority of volunteers are students or have just completed courses, and are in their twenties; mainly white British, with a few eastern European and BME women. The average age of RC volunteers in the study was 32. One volunteer in this study identified as a student, with one other planning to return to university. All those who participated were in paid employment, either full-time or part-time.

5.1.2 Political Activist Group

Women for Independence (WFI) is a politically activist group, set up initially in 2012 in support of the Yes campaign for Scottish Independence. It is digitally-rooted, and initially formed on Twitter when a few women noticed that they were sharing similar tweets and decided to meet in person. It was one of many bodies and groups set up to campaign in the referendum, but was not part of the official Yes campaign, so it did not have the paid staff behind it that some of the official 'Yes' groups had. WFI can boast members of recently elected MP's and MSP's – and can claim to have influenced parliamentary debate (Mellon, 2017; Mitchell et al., 2016).

'The average age of all WFI members is 54. 35% of members hold a university degree and just over a third work full-time; a further one in five work part-time and over a quarter are retired. Members are spread throughout Scotland with members concentrated broadly in line with population' (J. Mitchell et al., 2016, para. 9)

Despite the Yes campaign failing to gain independence for Scotland, the Women for Independence (WFI) group has experienced a substantial increase in membership since September 19th 2014 (the day following the Independence referendum) and took members to their first AGM in March 2015. The organisation is self-funded through 'Crowd Funding'³ and membership fees.

'After the referendum the decision was taken to continue to exist. So what has just been a campaign, a brand almost, that people could use if they saw fit very fluidly during the campaign itself, we have constitutionalised now so we now have a structure: we have a membership.' (Nicole (WFI)_29.6.15)

The organisation website describes itself as "a network of women who aim to improve the representation of women in public and political life throughout Scotland" (Women for Independence, 2014). This study focuses on one local branch, while also taking the opportunity to interview one of the founding/committee members of the national organisation, and one woman from another branch (who asked to participate). Ten women participated in the study, with others also being observed and taking part in poetry workshops. The average age was 53.

5.1.3 'Unregulated' 'below-the radar' organisation

'Tangled Rose': A local Line Dance group made up of women from various small communities across Central Scotland. The group is unregulated by any authority or policy

³ Crowd Funding: A relatively modern way for autonomous projects or ventures to raise financial support from the general public, typically via the Internet. There are various online sources of crowd funding, each with their own terms and conditions.

makers and is completely self-sufficient. Consisting of mostly retired women from communities across Central Scotland, 'Tangled Rose' as a group does not have any legal status, nor do they apply or lobby for external funding unlike the two others groups. While this gives them some freedom in terms of autonomy, it also places some risk around the longevity of the group, meaning that the group as a whole depends on the continued membership and attendance of each individual or the recruitment of new members.

While most of the members are of pension age, group members' ages do range from four to ninety years (the younger being the grandchildren of some of the members). This group have quite a history of organising various charitable events, and raising and donating financial contributions to various local 'in-need' projects - usually nominated by members of the group. Although consisting of all women, the group is not 'women only' in principle – it has simply developed that way over its duration. 'Unregulated' or 'below, or under, the radar' (BTR) (McCabe et al., 2010) is often used to describe small, community-based organisations that do not have a recognised legal status and therefore do not appear on the Charity Commission or other regulatory registers, or those that are registered but have low incomes or turnover (MacGillivray, 2001; CEFET, 2007).

5.2 Meeting the groups

5.2.1 Rape Crisis

'We have loyalty from workers and volunteers because this organisation is rooted in volunteering' (Rose: 24.2.2016)

From the very beginning of my research project I entered into negotiations with the centre manager. I knew the manager, and other management staff, having previously

trained there as a Rape Crisis Support worker (volunteer) – however, I did not volunteer at this particular centre. The first deeper steps ‘into the field’ involved a number of meetings with the deputy manager (the centre manager was on long-term sick leave at this point), and with the volunteer co-ordinator to discuss how best to approach this piece of research that would benefit my project and the centre. Discussions were held with regard to what the centre might want from the research study, how it might be of benefit to them, and how I might approach the study without too much disturbance to staff, volunteers, and service users.

Nine women from Rape Crisis participated in this study. Three were managers. The remaining six volunteered as helpline workers, and all stated that they hoped to progress to face-to-face support work. They each had undergone six months of intense training to reach the position as helpline worker, and had, on completing their training, promised to dedicate at least three hours per week to the centre. In addition to the three hours of volunteering, they were requested, although this was not demanded, to attend volunteer meetings and centre meetings. They also had to attend supervision and support sessions as part of self-care. All of the women from Rape Crisis who participated worked full-time, or studied full-time. Some worked and studied, some had families, some were lone parents, and some had no children. All but one mentioned ‘struggling with time’. Following my departure from the centre, a ‘volunteer of the month’ award was created to show the value of the volunteers, an award that is nominated by their peers. At the end of the year there is an additional award to those who have been nominated multiples times. The volunteer of the month award is awarded for all sorts of reasons and is not necessarily about time committed to the centre. A few months later I received an email from Millie (in this study) to say she had received the first ‘Volunteer-of-the-month’ Award.

5.2.1.1 Pamper Day: 29.8.2018

‘No-one joins RC to talk about building maintenance. You’re here for a reason - and it's not that. (Rose: 24.2.2016)

The centre manager explained that while a political commitment within sexual violence is ‘everyone’s motivation’, there is less of that now with people who are becoming involved. She broke the volunteers into categories:

1. Those who come for the training and then leave.
2. Those who come, train and work as volunteers for a while but it is about gathering expertise and experience for a career choice.
3. Those who have a very deep rooted feminist politics - and equality concerns.
4. Survivors - but they have to work through their issues first before embarking on any training.

‘The minority are those who have very strong feminist beliefs and deep rooted politics that were so relevant in the early times. This is affecting shared responsibility within the centre and attendance at centre meetings as some volunteers don't always see centre meetings as a priority’.

‘During the ‘collective’ days, everyone had to attend centre meetings’
(Carol-Ann)

In an attempt to engage the volunteers with centre meetings, management decided to rename one of the centre meetings as a ‘Pamper day’. This event was also as a way of thanking volunteers for their continued support. Self-care was also the topic of the day

– looking after yourself (as a volunteer and staff member), and staff would teach volunteers about self-care, while also offering massage treatment and treats to say ‘thank you’. There were weeks of planning involved to organise the event. Activities were planned, food was arranged, small gifts were purchased for each volunteer and pleas were sent out to local retailers asking for donations to also give as gifts. A full discussion of this event is covered in chapter eight – ‘Facilitating spaces’

5.2.1.2 Reclaim the Night: 26.11.15

Following two months of observing Rape Crisis volunteers within the setting of the centre, I joined paid staff, volunteers and members of the public as they walked together in time, reclaiming the right to feel safe in their communities. Although I did not attend the centre in the lead up to this event, I would like to add something here about the activities of the event, given that I returned to the centre to participate in the rally. I arrived at the centre in the late afternoon and helped staff with some last-minute arrangements. I travelled to the event with Carol-Ann in her car as she needed some help transporting banners and signs. It was dark, cold and starting to rain when we arrived at the gathering spot. The area was rather deserted when we arrived so Carol-Ann went off to try to find some others, while I waited with all the banners, glow-sticks and wooden signs. I felt a little uncomfortable standing alone on a corner of a busy city – more so, when a male approached and propositioned me: a rather ironically unpleasant experience given that we were about to march through the city protesting global violence against women. I moved from my position after the incident with the stranger, and stood around the corner in a better-lit area. Fortunately, two of the centre volunteers arrived, quickly followed by some of the centre staff. I was very thankful to have their company. My colleagues and I passed out glow-sticks to newly-arriving groups of women and handed out banners and signs to anyone who wanted to carry them. The

mood was high and women were chatting excitedly. Around half-an-hour later, the people around us began slowly to move and I realised the procession had begun. Off we walked, slowly, through the city. We sang, chanted and shouted various slogans together. As we walked I also had time to chat with the two volunteers who were with me: asking them what the march meant to them and why it was important to take part in a march that was also taking place in many others cities. En route, we bumped into Allison, who was stewarding the event. She had taken time away from her paid employment so that she could help out with the march. It was important to her to be a part of the event.

Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of women (and a few men) walked together through the city with sense of collective and mutual action that feels good: it is difficult not to feel good surrounded by a sense of reciprocated respect that often encapsulates these marches. In a time where many women feel increasingly silenced within online communities, walking in solidarity with others, women feel like their voices get heard. This example of a democratic right to protest in the public space, and come together in solidarity, brings organisers and members of the public together to reclaim their right to exist equally in the communities they share.

5.2.2 Women for Independence

Following an email to the Women for Independence national website, the co-convenor of the organisation offered to meet with me for an interview. While not a founding member, Nicole is now one of the organisation's primary organisers. We arranged to meet in a café in the west side of Glasgow during her lunch break from work. She was happy to chat to me about the history and future aims of the organisation, but also about the group's understanding of women's time. WFI as an organisation insist that members

never apologise for not attending meetings, and that smaller local groups show understanding of the demands on women's time. I spoke to Nicole about the various local groups of WFI scattered throughout Scotland and asked her about one local group who had captured my attention with their various activities. I had been observing this particular group via their social media page and was keen to approach them. Nicole supported my choice, adding that they were a small, but active branch. My interview with Nicole took place during her lunchbreak, where she constantly apologised for eating and speaking at the same time. I have yet to interview anyone who could get across the depth and complexities of information in such a short time. She spoke passionately, humorously, and honestly about the WFI organisation: their visions, but also the realities of the boundaries and of what they could do. Nicole spoke about her role in the organisation with brutal honesty about the chaotic data that she had encountered when embarking on this role, but also with pride as she relayed how organised and efficient the organisation had become. On discussing the various local groups attached to the national organisation, and how visible they were with regard to the failed referendum, Nicole explained that some of the groups had fallen silent, but that this was perfectly Ok; that people needed time to adjust to the result, and to pull thoughts together as to what next steps might be. She also spoke of an understanding that the women involved had been volunteering at an accelerated rate during the referendum and needed time to rest and recuperate.

Following my interview with Nicole, I messaged the WFI (branch) group (that Nicole and I had discussed) via their Facebook page. I received a message from one of their admin members who was inquisitive as to what my research was about. We communicated once or twice and then the communication fell away. I was concerned to not trouble the group with a series of messages within a short space of time, so allowed a few weeks to pass while undertaking the remainder of my field work at Rape Crisis. I was however keen to get the next case study under some kind of organisation.

Keeping a close eye on their social media page I noticed that the group were having a celebration of their first anniversary, so decided to go along on the off-chance that I may get to speak with them about being part of this study. This is always a difficult situation – not wanting to force oneself upon others, but at the same time, not wishing to overlook what could be the perfect opportunity to introduce myself and put across the aims and objections of my project in person.

I duly arrived at a small community hall in a rural town within central Scotland. The hall was filled with women who were busy chatting to one another; children were playing, and tables were laden with delicious pasties, scones, cheeses, sandwiches, and homemade jams. I recognised Nicole, the national convener and introduced myself again. I then slowly approached one or two of the women. I can't recall, or even say I am aware of what drew me to each particular woman, perhaps they were standing alone, perhaps they were wearing something bright. As it turned out, one of the women I first introduced myself to was the mother of the two women who set up this particular WFI group. I then met with the member who had communicated with me via Facebook. To my delight, she was thrilled to meet with me and was extremely interested in my study. I had presumed that the silence of recent weeks was a suggestion that the group were not overly interested in participating, but in fact, the silence was simply a matter of 'busyness' of members. How apt. During the afternoon, another woman approached me, she was from a WFI group in South Glasgow and had travelled to the event by train and bus simply to attend and support this other WFI group. This lady was fully of energy and passion for what was happening in Scotland in regard to women and politics. She was keen to meet with me and participate in an interview. While I was particularly interested in all members being from the same group, I couldn't resist this woman's enthusiasm and agreed to include her in my study. Following an afternoon of introductions and information sharing about this group, I was invited to the group's next meeting, which

was arranged to take place four weeks later. I left feeling a great deal happier – and with a pot of home-made raspberry jam.

It had been my initial intent to organise my field work with case studies 1, 2, and 3 taking place consecutively: July – end of September, October – end of December, and January - end of March. However, after meeting with the women from WFI, negotiations of time meant that my time with them would take place between October and the beginning of January. This happened to be the same period of time as previously planned fieldwork with another case study group, 'Tangled Rose'. However, the WFI group were planning to repeat a project within this same time period, and felt it would be more suitable to them if I joined them then. The project they had in mind was a Christmas event which would take place during the whole month of December, and their planning process, and monthly meetings would allow me some insight into planning and organising a project from their perspective. To allow me to interview these women and be privy to their meetings, I agreed to help with their project when it got underway. Interviews would take place following time spent with them at their group and project meetings, with the prospect of some poetry workshops also. Fitting the WFI group into this time period of case study fieldwork now meant the during the course of October to January, I would be participating with two case study groups.

5.2.2.1 Wee Christmas Project

'Have a bright idea... Do it' (Morag: 23.10.2015)

In December, 2015, this group of women from various small towns and villages spread across an area of Central Scotland opened up their 'Wee Christmas shop' for the second year running. What is particularly striking about this shop, is not simply the idea of offering donations of gifts or money on a charitable basis for local families, but the

empowering and equalising experience offered to those visiting the shop. This project offers those who might otherwise be denied, the opportunity to browse and purchase (donated) gifts for their loved ones on a 'pay-what-you-can' basis. It might be described as 'charity with dignity'. Donations of toys, gifts and children's clothing are offered: delivered by local residents, or picked by group members, the 'shop' is modelled in a manner that families and individuals can come, browse and purchase items for loved ones. The group members complete desired days/times on an online rota via their private social media page, for when they are available to volunteer in the shop – and they make the shopping experience as close to what one might experience in any retail shopping mall: Christmas songs are played, samples of food and drinks are offered, and an all-round 'Christmas' atmosphere is provided so that those who visit are given the opportunity of 'being part of rest of society at Christmas' (Kara). All monies gathered are then passed onto local causes after all relevant bills are paid for. Unlike the national organisation, the structure of this group is far less formal.

'no bank accounts and no constitution... no office bearers...
Better for it'. (Morag: 23.10.2015)

In addition, and in contrast to busy mainstream shops, volunteers have time for conversation with those who enter - listening to concerns about life in the community, and making inroads to solutions. This building of social cohesion, trust and reciprocity between volunteers and shoppers, neighbours and local residents is something not often found in stores at Christmastime given the busy nature of the time period. The shop is open for the full month of December, six days per week, from 9am until 5pm and closing the day before Christmas. The group then clear out the building, taking any remaining

items to local charity shops, by 30th December. Everyone who donated to the shop in some way felt as if they were doing something useful

‘They become part of identifying a problem and part of the solution.’ (Rhona: 23.10.15)

While some members from the wider community suggested collecting toys, and delivering them to families, the group disagreed.

‘We will have them in the shop where parents can come and shop, and choose toys for their children, and buy them with their own money, however meagre... to allow them to do the things that all parents want to do’ (Rhona: 23.10.2015)

While the national committee is tackling political issues with a capital ‘P’, this local groups tackles community matters with a small political ‘p’ – offering social events, training, and various campaigning and fundraising measures within their local communities. For reasons of confidentiality, I have not included the branch identifier of the group in this study, however, one version of their booklet of poetry – which may be used for their own purposes, does identify their geographical position.

5.2.3 Tangled Rose

Tangled Rose are a group of women who meet 1-4 times weekly to line-dance. Gracie, a local woman who is involved with various events in the local community centre, teaches

the classes. Wednesday evenings are their busiest night, with around one hundred members turning up regularly. They mostly meet in a large community hall, but occasionally a social club, in a small town in Scotland. Each year, a small number (eight to ten) of the dancers and their grandchildren write, rehearse and perform seasonal pantomimes for the local community. All of the women are of retirement age, apart from Bella, who tells me she 'should be retired but the government changed the age of retirement for women', and Clair, Gracie's daughter. The core adult members who make up the pantomime cast have been doing so for the past fifteen years, however each year, they bring in new cast members from the wider dance group. These cast members remain 'unknown' to the wider dance class until the first performance. Their pantomime is completely self-funded, and profits made from each performance ticket sales are given to various causes each year, some local, some larger, well-known causes. There are two performances: the first performance takes place at the dance group's yearly Christmas party, and the second performance takes place in a local community hall. This second performance is usually attended by local families and residents of nearby nursing homes.

The pantomime grew out of comedy sketches and routines, created and performed by Gracie, at Tangled Rose Christmas parties around fifteen years ago. These sketches became increasingly complex and they now take the form of an hour-long pantomime. The scripts are written by two main members, Gracie and her daughter Clair, but with input from all other cast members. Ideas for the script begin around January to March each year, and members are approached on an informal basis: regular members are asked if they would like to return, and to suggest who might be suitable as the 'secret' performers. Twice-weekly rehearsals then begin in September with the performance taking place in early December. Costumes are created (and funded) by the members themselves but with help from another dance member and local dressmaker if required. This year was unusual in that a male dance instructor from another group was invited to act as the narrator of the show.

Gracie, who is the dance instructor, and the force behind the pantomime, has been teaching line dancing (on an amateur basis) for over twenty-five years. She is not paid for this role, and all monies collected from each dance class go toward hire of the hall, equipment, and various weekend events that she organises for the dance group. The preparations for their seasonal (Christmas) performances begin around March, with more intense rehearsal and group meet-ups developing sometime in September. It is during this period that the study of this group took place. At the time of writing this thesis, Gracie had been nominated to attend one of Queen Elizabeth's garden parties (Royal UK, 2018), in recognition for the work she carries out in her local community .

While I have given the group the pseudonym 'Tangled Rose', the DVD of their performance, which developed from this fieldwork, contains their real group name and was created for their own use. The pseudonym was given for reasons of confidentiality, given that the cast are small in number, and individual confidentiality may be at risk within the thesis if the group is identified.

5.2.3.1 Meeting the members

I met with the pantomime members of the dance group in a social club situated in the middle of a large social housing estate in a working-class area of Scotland. It appears that many of the surrounding homes have been purchased at some point through government 'Right to Buy' schemes, although the 'Right to Buy' ended for all council and housing association tenants in Scotland on 31 July 2016 (Scottish Government, 2016).

'The social club looks to be dated around 1960's/early 1970's. The building looks pretty run-down from the outside. Inside however, the hallways, bar and rooms are carpeted, and I listen over the noise from the bar to see if I

can locate the group I have come to meet. The interior is designed in the style of many British social clubs: one main bar serving customers via a 'hatch' in most of the other function rooms. There are a few doors off the main corridor leading to various function halls. The décor is plain: wooden tables with a number of chairs situated around each, however the rooms are spacious and each has a stage area and dance floor. The main communal bar has a few customers, and aroma of beer and sound of 'slot' machines and horse racing escape from the bar into the hallway. On entering the largest function room, I find seven women sitting in the far left hand corner around two tables pulled closely together. It's a temporary space that doesn't belong to the group – although the main dance teacher clearly feels a connection to the space. She tells me that has been using it for events for a long time and I notice she refers to the bar staff by their first names'. (Fieldnotes, September 2015).

The club has provided this free space to the group for fifteen years and Gracie is very keen to tell me how supportive the club owners have been to the group over the years – allowing them to use the function halls for various charity events over the years without charge. She repays this generosity by bringing clientele to the club in the form of paying customers. She also makes a point of purchasing soft drinks for everyone during the rehearsal.

"I always like to give something back, by buying the weans (children) and everyone a drink. They've (the club) always been that good to us over the years, so I always make sure we get something from the bar" (Gracie: Conversation during fieldwork. October 2015)

This reciprocity works in favour of both parties. Helping each other out in small, sometimes mundane ways that might go unnoticed with regard to notions of civic engagement, but which are often the making of communities. While they don't own the building, some of the women who form the pantomime cast appear to feel connected to the community building: they have prior relations to the area and to some of the people who live around. They have a history with the community that has built up over time, strengthening the ties within the group and between group and the wider community.

5.2.3.2 Pantomime activities

There are varied reasons why certain members agree to contribute more of their own time to the charitable evenings and pantomime events related to the line dancing classes: partaking in the stage performances requires high levels of commitment from these members, who have to attend rehearsals regularly and commit time to 'backstage' tasks such as set construction and costume design to ensure quality of performance. Those members of 'Tangled Rose' who do volunteer their time to the pantomime events (not all members do so) dedicate many hours of their free time: writing scripts, rehearsing, designing and creating costumes and stage props – all without any professional training or assistance, and which highlight the benefits of skill sharing within small community-led groups such as this e.g. (cf. MacGillivray et al., 2001; McCabe et al. 2010). My participation with the group will be discussed within the methods section, however I will give a brief insight to some of the background of the pantomime activities.

The group take the foundations of a well-known fairy tale, and adapt it to suit their own cultural and social context, producing interactive, entertaining, and emotionally rich data. Family members are often involved in the performance, but also within the stage settings, transport, building of props and creation of music. Grandchildren are involved,

not only as cast members, but are additionally offered opportunity to design their own costumes, choreograph dances, and write songs.

During the weeks and months of rehearsals, I floated the idea of recording their pantomime on video – as a way of documenting their endeavours. These women had never seen themselves perform. They had of course seen small snippets of home videos, but never the full hour-long performance. I asked them how they would feel about having it filmed professionally, adding that we might find a way of making a dvd that they could sell to friends and relatives – therefore collecting more money for their chosen cause. Initially they were unsure of watching themselves on screen: it's one thing walking onto a stage and performing – it's quite another to watch yourself doing so. This apprehensiveness and uncertainty reinforced my awareness of the position we have as researchers when we have control over where and how people's words are shared, and that we must try to ensure that our participants are happy and comfortable with what they have shared within research projects. Saying something in conversation is very different when seen written down, or heard. Bella observed something similar during rehearsals.

'You only know if it sounds right when you talk it through with each other'

I contacted some film and media colleagues at a local college, and together we arranged for some students to have this activity written into their course content. The college, myself and Gracie agreed on a group of students who would be most appropriate (time and locality wise) and we made arrangement for them to meet with the rest of group of women. Discussions took place as to what everyone would want from the recording: multiple camera angles, highlights, full production, help with sound. Benefit to one's

participants is an important obligation within our research practices that we should not overlook, and so questions were asked and ideas discussed around what benefit the recording would be to the group, to this research – and what the students and college lecturers might want from it also.

All members of the pantomime group and the students, working together, each deliberating what they each wanted, allowed everyone to act, not as passive objects, but as active agents in the project. In addition, this permitted me to experience and understand, (rather than observe) what the women wanted for their communities: they wanted fun, laughter and opportunities in the present – rather than campaigns about the distant future. But they also wanted to see themselves, their families and community actively participating in the project. In all, it took five months for the students to finish the editing of the performance. The following June, Gracie organised a ‘premiere’ ‘red-carpet’ viewing of the dvd in the community hall.

This group of women challenge ideas about aging, and their performances work to destigmatise (older) women who might otherwise feel marginalized. In addition, the cross generational collaboration with the students also provided opportunity for the young students to see a group of older citizens in a more empowered position. In the end my time with the latter two groups continued much longer than initially expected and contact with both groups continues sporadically even now.

6. Methodology and Methods

The study used a variety of methods, each of which cast light on a different aspect of the experience of how volunteering fits into overall life patterns. This study used participatory focused sociological theories as the central ‘way of thinking’ (Cho, et al., 2003, p.795) to rethink community and divisions of time use across the ‘mutually constitutive’ (Davis, 2008, p.71) categories of gender, age and class identities, and to explore experiences of voluntarism and community groups in towns across Scotland as they are characterised by multiple and interlocking inequalities. The methods included creative approaches that capture how knowledge is generated through collaborations, networks, relationships, dialogue, and ‘making’, and that allow researchers and participants to ‘act on’ data as they emerge from these creative interventions. The nature of knowledge and its production practices are highlighted in this chapter, showing ways of capturing everyday knowledge through poetry, conversations and performance. Academically positioned understandings of knowing and doing are only one part of the research landscape, which suggests that new conceptual tools (such as creative practice: making, reading, writing, thinking, discussion and reflection) are needed to explore the lives of individuals and groups in communities.

While feminism has argued that without gender as an analytical centre, family, work, politics, religion and the economy cannot be fully studied, its founding concept - gender - has become a little ‘taken for granted’ over recent decades (Oakley 2015). For this reason, I will also include references to intersectional feminist theory within the framework of the study to allow for the understanding that all women’s experiences, including my own, are valid and that no ‘truth’ or experience can be taken as given for all. This also allows for the stating of my own position, and the impact this will have on the analysis and understandings of my findings. My own presence in this study undoubtedly shapes the research process in that my own experiences affect what I view

as important topics for study, the methods I choose, how participants respond (e.g. in face to face interviews), or how I interpret the data (Millen, 1997).

This proposed approach is concerned with the positionality of women across the intersections of gender, class and age – exploring issues around the ‘we’ and ‘I’ within negotiations of identity, divisions of time use, imaginings of futures, and feelings of belonging to the communities with which these women choose to identify. It is also concerned with exploring how collaborative, creative and participatory methods disrupt traditional notions of power within research practice – to ask ‘whose voice is valued within the written text?’

While qualitative methodologies are considered more appropriate for feminist research by allowing subjective knowledge and a more equal relationship between researcher and researched (Oakley, 1981), it is important to note that there is no one feminist perspective, and therefore no one feminist methodology. Acknowledging the divisions *within* and *between* feminisms, and between feminist and non-feminist researchers (Jayaratne and Stewart, 1991; Oakley, 1981; Westmarland, 2001) allows for a more informed reading of such studies.

In considering an approach to research that was suitable to answering the research questions, several factors had to be considered. Firstly, the approach should be able to employ a range of methods, especially given that this study would engage three contrasting case study groups. The approach should reflect the ontological position taken, and finally, it should consider the temporal restrictions of the female participants within the study. What studies often miss out, as others have mentioned (Callaghan, 2011; Dempsey, 1990, 1992; Richards, 2002), is all the informal work that is crucial to organisations, but that doesn’t necessarily fit with what is understood as formal volunteering, and is less easily captured by quantitative methods. When investigating meaning, as established in literature review chapter, where people understand how time

varies, qualitative methods are able to 'get at' aspects of time that are variable in how we experience them.

Mead (1934) observed that social life is subjective and fluid, and so for me, the best way to understand this subjectivity and fluidity of society was to experience it, to witness it in action, and to immerse myself in it. Participation therefore held the most promise. However, other complementary methods, such as poetry, and interviews were also utilised within this study. Methods such as those utilised in this study can be used in an effort to 'create shared meanings, while at the same time considering the significant challenges to creating truly inclusive spaces' (Enria, 2015, p.320).

In my time as a researcher, volunteer and community member I have used arts as a method to connect, open dialogue, participate and conduct research. I have walked, talked, sat with, held workshops and even sung onstage with participants and community members. I struggle at times when writing about my methods - are they participatory, creative, observant? I prefer to use Elizabeth Campbell and Eric Lassiter's description of 'observant participant' (Campbell and Lassiter, 2015) to define my participation with the three projects – all with varying degrees, while observing what others were doing. Interviews were part of this, both formal and informal conversational interviews, and within some groups, poetry was also used as a method. Diary methods were also offered to participants, although this method was not as successful as the others. Within all of these methods, women were offered a level of control over what they shared. Four used diaries to record their days. Others, following the poetry workshops, took their poems home and restructured them, sending them back to me. Others were creating their own data as they changed and developed their pantomime - giving each other new roles... including myself.

The three case study groups were associated with various nuances of participatory methods. All involved interviews, conversations, observations, and participation with

group activities to varying degrees. The poetry, writing and performance are, as Richardson has suggested, a form of 'narrative knowing' (1997, p.23). I also engage with Pahl *et al.* who present 'different voices and in different formats' (2010, p.23). Some of the writing interspersed throughout this study is un-touched by my voice.

6.1 Imagine

This PhD study is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council and is project linked to the Imagine Project (Imagine, 2017). The Imagine project was a five-year programme of research, connecting communities and universities to research through arts practices, storytelling, writing, poetry and visual images. The various projects within Imagine used arts to understand the everyday language and literacy practices of different communities across various communities in the UK. The Imagine project was funded by the Connected Communities programme, which was launched in 2010 by Research Councils UK and the AHRC, to encourage collaboration between universities, community organizations, community researchers and artists to draw on expertise across disciplines and within communities.

Its main focus was on the co-production of research through collaborative practices. There were four main 'work packages' within the project looking at the social, cultural, historical and democratic context of civic engagement. This study was affiliated within work package four: the democratic context of civic engagement. The project was pre-designed to explore what time was to the individual in the community, and from that, this thesis developed by me to look at the time and temporalities in the lives of female community volunteers and activists.

The aim of Imagine was to engage communities with research that looks at questions around civic engagement and asks "*Can we imagine better communities, and make them happen?*" (Brown, 2016; Pahl, 2017). The approach sought to broaden community

involvement in research, while exploring new and innovative ways for universities and community partners to work co-productively (Rasool, 2017), and to include community partners in all stages of the research. My own thesis topic area was predesigned as part of the original funding proposal, and while the study may not be described as fully co-produced, like the other Imagine projects the findings have been collaboratively produced by the methods chosen by the participants.

My involvement with the Imagine project offered opportunity for philosophical conversations across varied cultural contexts – all which stimulated and developed my knowledge base, particularly around the shifting and multi-layered field contexts and partnerships within community based research and the field of community studies. Imagine taught me so much more than I had expected. I learned to take chances, deal with unexpected situations, and to be confident. I am a creature of habit, and find comfort in the familiar. I know which environments I work best in and which times of day I am most productive. However, the opportunities offered to me via the Imagine project have taught me that there is value in stepping outside one's comfort zone. I was encouraged to engage with different ideas and structures, to talk publicly across varied contexts, and I emerged a more knowledgeable and confident individual from the experience.

6.2 Temporality of methods

There is value in visiting time that is being disrupted - something about what looks right and what doesn't look right about a particular use of time: questions around what might be the right use of time in order to get what I needed, and those things that are often invalidated by some hierarchies of how things should be done properly or within boundaries of time restraints. We experience the world around us through and with our bodies – not simply through cognitive understandings, but also through embodied

knowings such as hunger, touch, smell, vision, discomfort, pain and emotion. In seeking ways of getting at these areas, Law discusses the 'mess' in social science research, and a need for researchers to 'rethink our ideas about clarity and rigour and try to find ways of knowing the indistinct and the slippery without trying to grasp and hold them tight' (2004, p.3).

In a similar sense with visual arts practice where the subject suggests the medium required to portray its meaning, research topics require a particular method to relay a narrative. However, the rules and procedures within these methods should be challenged, boundaries pushed and risks taken so that we can capture the more hidden, indistinct and slippery realities of lived experiences. The poetry used in this study was chosen as a means to 'get at' these more hidden areas of how we live in time – and I will discuss this later in this chapter.

Time is a crucial issue in many women's lives. It is interesting to note how power structures come into play within research studies – especially connected to time. What is important to some people in regard to time restrictions may not be important to others. When conducting a piece of research that investigates women's time, the temporality of methods becomes crucial. Arranging meetings with female participants, with a concern not to infringe upon their time unduly, becomes a negotiation, not only of time, but also of methods.

The three case study groups in this piece of research raised issues of not only the different types of civic engagement, but also of the various temporalities involved in these women's community participation. It was crucial that the time they were to spend speaking with me did not cause them anxieties related to time restrictions, and so timely negotiations and method choice was paramount. This in turn meant that the fieldwork involved in this study took much longer than was initially imagined, which in turn caused me anxieties in relation to the schedule of my research. I had to make pragmatic decisions about methods and not being purist about certain methods. I had to make

judgement calls about appropriate ways of working, but this could be seen as a luxury (by some) given that I had three years of funding.

Doing research, especially the kind that is fragmented as this was, can clash with other responsibilities as a woman. Researchers also have responsibilities and as a female researcher I found my own personal and family commitments being swallowed up by my fieldwork (and vice-versa at times). Given that this study explored how women negotiate their time and relationships, I was aware of the times we are asked to transgress the area of 'sufficient time'. A great deal of volunteering is done in the evenings and weekends which meant that quite a lot of my time was spent in fieldwork during these periods – time that I might usually spend with my family or own volunteering activities. This in itself allowed me to experience for myself the negotiations that other women make in their volunteering lives.

The women in all of my case study groups were offered variations within the methods available, depending on their group structure and personal preferences. Interviews, observant participation, poetry and diary methods were included in this study, which may seem like an impossible task and with risks attached, but was developed as a means to offer more choice to those participating in the research process. This also meant that some participants were included in both observation and interviews, some participated through interviews and diary methods, others in participation, interviews and poetry workshops. This variety of methods accommodated difficulties with time, while also offering participants choice over how deeply they wished to involve themselves in the research process. As an early career researcher this was an exhausting approach with risks attached to time limits and how these methods sit together, but pushing boundaries in research is, I believe, something that should be expected of us.

It was a deliberate attempt on my part to spend time with all volunteers in their habitat or place of volunteering before asking them to be interviewed. This allowed me to

witness their activities and interactions, while also allowing a 'transition to friendship' (Oakley, 2016, p.196) to develop. Each of the three groups in this study have their own relationships with time and community – and being involved with each of the groups over extended periods allowed me to experience these different temporalities within each of their spaces and over the course of their activities. This chapter will therefore not only discuss the methods used within this study, but the practicalities and temporalities of these methods as an opening to further discussions of women's timely negotiations within volunteering.

6.3 Interviewing

Time was an important subject of negotiation with the volunteers. It was not simply the amount of time I spent with the women, but rather how we used our interview time. My training as a rape crisis support worker allowed me to sit in with helpline sessions, and so this is the manner in which these interviews with Rape Crisis volunteers took place. All volunteers attend at least one helpline session per week, so it took a few weeks of being around the centre to attract enough interest in my study. Slowly, through mostly just being visible in the centre and engaging in informal conversations, volunteers came on board – and for all but one, on the understanding that interviews would take place during the helpline period – when and if the helpline was quiet. It was clear that these women's lives were busy, and that they did not feel able to make, or find time for further demands on their time. I was present within the centre two to three days per week, which meant that the days where I was not present, I missed the volunteers who were scheduled for that day. Helpline hours ran from 11am -2pm, and 5pm until 7pm, or 7pm until 9pm. For the most part, volunteers were on the rota for the same shift each week in accordance to their own personal timetables. I therefore tried to schedule my time

differently each week to catch a variety of volunteers. However, this proved more difficult than I had imagined, especially once interviews began.

During quiet periods of helpline sessions, I interviewed the women, pausing if calls came into the centre. The isolation of the helpline room allowed for privacy and confidentiality but, similar to Puwar's study of female MP's who noted that 'once you have got to the stage of actually meeting the MP you still cannot be sure of the amount of time that will be allowed' (1997, para.6.2), the busy-ness of this centre, meant that there were many occasions when a call would come in just as an interview began, and would last for the whole two hours of the volunteer's helpline period. One particular interview then took place over four weekly sessions. This also meant that the initial intention of scheduling days each week in the hope of accessing a variety of volunteers was greatly restricted. I had to return the same days each week to continue with interviews that had been stopped short the previous week.

Fragmenting interviews in this way had both positive and negative aspects. The extended time period required for each interview meant that I could get to know the participant over a longer period of time, but it also meant that the stopping and starting of the interview process hampered the flow of information. The reorganising also took a lot of time out of the fieldwork period. The fragmented nature of these interviews allowed periods of similar time experienced by the women in the study, but understood as different, to emerge in a way that may not have been possible if following traditional rules of interviews. Given that some interviews took place over several occasions, I was able to hear the women in the study describe similar temporal experiences quite differently, based on how they recalled the event during each interview. This suggests not only that time is experienced differently depending on the social environment of the person, but that we can recall things differently dependent on our mood. If given only one opportunity to recall something, then this recollection may not be reliable. However, 'accuracy' was not the primary focus of this study. The study was more concerned with

‘validity, rather than objectivity and reliability, and put less emphasis on finding “the truth”’ (Westmarland, 2001, p.8).

The interview itself is a process with a beginning, a middle and an end – with each taking its own time – and ideally should not be compressed or shortened if we are to show respect to the individual being interviewed. Interviews often open with informal pleasantries to allow an interviewee opportunity to settle (Davies, 1990; Mason, 2002b). Interviews that were fragmented over several occasions had to go through this process each time which resulted in the process being lengthy. I had to ensure that each interview picked up where the previous one left off, which involved recapping the interview with the interviewee. At times, this was enough to start the interviewee talking, at other times, the woman being interviewed waited until I asked the next question.

Some elements of the interviewing followed a conventional pattern and had connections to the discussions in Mason's (2002a; 2002b) well-known writing on qualitative interviewing. Interviews were semi-structured and thematic, covering areas of volunteering, community, families, employment and time restrictions, and for the most part captured what Burgess describes as ‘conversations with a purpose’ (Burgess, 1984, p.102).

Interviews that took place with the other groups involved visiting women’s homes and it was interesting to note (in terms of women’s work and restricted time) just how often the participants offered me home-cooked food, or apologised for not having food for me. I learned during previous studies and community engagements the importance of accepting food when offered from participants. Davies (1990) also highlights this as a way of sharing in trusted conversations with participants.

Apologies were also offered for ‘messy’ homes, although no messy homes were ever noted (I cannot say the same for my own home during this busy period of juggling

fieldwork for two separate case study groups). Tea or coffee was always offered (and accepted), but I also had the pleasure of sampling home-made soups, bread, scones and jam from participants. Interviews lasted on average 1.5 hours, however some lasted much longer, especially those interviews that included multiple family members or simply because participants wanted to talk about their lives. One woman in particular chatted with me for almost two and a half hours. Her conversation flitted back and forth between the present, past and future – sharing with me all sorts of stories about her life, past friends and her dreams for the future. There were moments, I must admit when I had to stop myself from glancing at my watch. Aware of the passing time, I let her talk. My experiences of being a support worker allowed me the understanding of knowing the benefit to others of listening quietly. A good researcher knows how to listen and what to listen for, but some of my listening on this occasion was for the benefit of my interviewee. The benefit to my study was not always found in the words she said, but the various topics of her conversations – and the temporal aspects of it as her past and future intermingled with her present life.

The second and third case-study groups, WFI and TR, involved me spending time with the groups before beginning the interview process which meant that the women had become quite comfortable with me and quickly ‘settled into’ the interview, and shared intimate details of their lives during this process. I found that the interviews in this study generally took on a ‘circular process through which the meaning of a question and that of its answer are created in a discourse between interviewer and respondent as they try to make continuing sense of what they are saying to each other’ (Mishler, 1986. pp.53-54), so that although I asked similar questions to each woman, the questions were understood in different ways and carried different significance for each woman – and often elicited different responses (Mishler, 1986, Gladstone, 2013). Some of the interviewees were helped by the study in various ways. In positive terms, it made them

think about what they were doing (recognising the benefit of their volunteering), but also about their time restrictions – finding some kind of order in their thoughts.

Millie, for example, reflected a great deal on her interviews and our conversations with specific regard to time and how she viewed her time spent with Rape Crisis. I was also aware of the ways in which my own responses: ‘silences, nods, pauses, nonverbal expressions and verbal recognitions garnered different kinds of responses’ (Gladstone, 2013. P.64) and at times affected what the women chose to share. My relationships with the women in the study allowed trusts and friendships to develop, and while this is often discouraged in traditional accounts of research interviews, Finch (1984) and Oakley (1981) (amongst others) have argued that a ‘close and equal relationship to the researched’ can actually lead to the emergence of more ‘fruitful and significant’ data (Westmarland, 2001, p.8).

One must however beware of participants oversharing. Finch, in her discussion of women interviewees, highlights the ‘easy flow of information’ that can be said to derive from an understanding that women are used to ‘accepting intrusions through questioning into the more private parts of their lives’ – and therefore, as subjects of research, ‘women are less likely than men’ to find such intrusions off-putting (1984, p.74). Additionally, the interviews in the women’s own homes were designed to take on the role of informal conversation – and this at times can feel like a ‘sympathetic ear’ to those individuals who do not have the opportunity to engage collectively with other women. Having something in common with the women in my study prompted a level of trust but also an expectation that as a woman, mother, volunteer and activist, I shared in their experiences – prompting the women to make a connection by placing me within the category of ‘people like us’. This of course had very positive results for me as a researcher – the women in the study were open to the interview process and chatted comfortably with me. Nevertheless, I was aware of ethical concerns that this level of trust can elicit. Some of the women shared very intimate details of their lives – without

any real demand for guaranteed confidentiality and which made me think of risk of exploitation – whereby information given freely through this trust could be used against the interests of those being researched (Finch 1984; Oakley, 1981). I was aware of my position here, and there are certainly parts of conversation and interview data that I have chosen not to use in the study, and others that were deleted on request from participants during the interview process.

In all, thirty-one women (and seven grandchildren) were involved in the study. Almost all women were interviewed – some ending abruptly (without following up) due to interruption and time clashes, others lasting a few hours. With regard to numbers of interviews, an area often discussed (Baker and Edwards, 2012), I came to realise that it was often the quality of analysis, and the dignity and care directed toward participants, rather than quantity of interviews that I valued in other studies. ‘A small number of interviews may not enable researchers to compare particular groups or to consider frequency distribution’, however building relationships with smaller groups can produce findings based on narratives filled with ‘richness, complexity and detail’ (Baker and Edwards, 2012, p.5). Informal conversations also took place within the ethnographic environment and these informal conversations made for a great deal of gathered data that was not planned for but which emerged from the activities and engagement taking place at the time.

6.4 Collaborative methods and relationships

There is a growing interest in the use of collaborative arts-based methods within community research that is opening a space outside of the boundaries of traditional methods of data gathering; a space that improves the ‘critical attentiveness, collaboration and experimentation’ (Back and Puwar, 2012) of both data gathering and dissemination of analysis. This study involves an arts-based methodology using

poetry, one that fits well within a community development approach to the co-production of research. Combined with a feminist perspective, this has strong potential for collaborative co-produced research. Collaborative methodologies such as poetry are empowering and congruent with a mode of being and understanding that values voice and peoples own creative potential. The use of poetry as a method of research is becoming increasingly discussed within research inquiry (Brady, 2004; Butler-Kisber, 2005; Cahnmann, 2003; Carroll et al, 2011; Edwards and Weller, 2012). It challenges traditional ways of knowing, instead concerning itself with producing knowledge which is 'situated' and paying attention to discursive practices that shape human experience (Leavy, 2009, p.65).

6.4.1 Observant participation

Researchers in the field observing individuals or groups of people performing tasks often remain outside observers, asking questions and taking notes, but not getting involved in group activities. Schensul et al. define participant observation as 'the process of learning through exposure to or involvement in the day-to-day or routine activities of participants in the researcher setting' (1999, p.91). However, 'exposure to' suggests this could be limited to not getting involved oneself, while I am focussing on the second kind of participant observation: 'involvement in'. Embarking on participant observation, whereby I joined the three case study groups as an active group member (in varying degrees of participation), allowed me to get a first-hand perspective of the groups and their activities.

We often think of research participants as the people who we study, and we think of observation as the way we study them, so participant observation sounds like other kinds

of qualitative research — observing participants. But in this case, participant observation meant immersing myself, in varying degrees, as an active member in group activities while also observing the interactions between the individuals within the groups. Instead of observing as an outsider, I was performing two roles at once—objective observer and subjective participant (Mack et al., 2005). This was to prove more so in one group than in others, and while this method delivered data that were rich in meaning, it also proved difficult at times with regard to boundaries around what was expected of me as both researcher, and member of the group. Given the varying levels of formality within the three groups, the level of participation varied with each group setting. The more formal the group or organisation, the less I was able to participate fully. For example, although I am a fully-trained volunteer support worker with Rape Crisis, I was unable to participate in the very formal daily activities of this particular Rape Crisis Centre. I was, however, able to undertake everyday observations within the centre; shadowing and observing helpline shifts, and then participating in centre meetings and centre-led events. Given the layout of the interior of the centre, and because the centre is a space which service users regularly use, it was decided that I should not sit in communal areas with my notebook and pen, as this might prove unsettling to service users. I would therefore spend time observing and conversing with staff and volunteers and write up my notes within the private office space afterwards. While this was of course understandable, it did mean that certain small observations might be forgotten by the time writing up notes occurred. No matter how observant one might be, it is not possible to remember every detail of activity after some time has passed, no matter how short the length of time may be. Some of the volunteers, while happy to engage in conversation, or interviews (during the helpline time) were not so comfortable being observed under close scrutiny – which was the case with the helpline room being so enclosed, and so helpline workers partaking in helpline activity were only observed for short periods of time for fear of making participants feel uncomfortable during their helpline work. My previous knowledge of

management, and the layout of the centre did allow me to settle in fairly easily. I made an effort to offer support to the staff and help out with any related events taking place within and out-with the centre.

There was some difficulty engaging in long informal conversation with volunteers as their time within the centre was restricted. Most volunteers are rushing from their workplace, or other commitments to their scheduled helpline time. Many spoke of having to ask for time off work, or to leave work early to account for travel hold-ups. Those on temporary work contracts felt the most anxiety over whether they would make their weekly voluntary shift, given that they never quite knew from one week to the next whether they were required to work in their paid employment.

On arrival at the centre, volunteers' time is often spent talking with paid staff about any difficulties or concerns they may have, and so informal conversation was limited to just a few minutes. Weekends were often the best time to engage with conversation before and after helpline shifts, but this was often dependent on how early the volunteer would arrive to unlock the centre, or how late they were willing to stay behind after their shift was finished. On these weekend helpline shifts, volunteers have keys to unlock (and lock) the centre, and so I was required to wait until someone arrived before I could enter. The volunteers were offered the opportunity to keep a diary on the days they were volunteering, accounting for their day and any emotional feelings attached to their volunteering, or day in general. However, given that most were often rushing to the centre from work meant that only one Rape Crisis volunteer completed a diary.

The WFI group participation varied also. Sitting in on their group meetings, and being invited to their private online group, allowed me to observe interactions and activities between members, but their seasonal Christmas project allowed me to play a participatory role: learning the rules and norms of activity and working alongside other members of the group in the running of the shop. There were other activities: group

meetings, marches, and local community events that I participated in with this group, including helping out at the National conference that they were hosting.

‘Observant participation’ (Campbell and Lassiter, 2015) is a process which provides researchers with opportunities to learn about the activities of participants in their own environments through observing and participating in those activities (Kawulich, 2005). Immersion in the activities of groups and members: participating with their activities so as to ‘blend into the community so that its members will act naturally’ (Kawulich, 2005 para.3) allows a unique view of individual experiences (Grasswick, 2012), while also allowing trust to be formed and power differences to be reduced.

Being a process means that there is a temporal framework around this method, and it can be very time-consuming. Participating and engaging with a group as a new member requires learning about the group and its activities in much greater detail than when simply observing or taking notes. Performing shared activities with group members offers greater empathy, as well as a much richer understanding of others in the group, and the rules and norms of their activities (Grasswick, 2012). As a new group member, I was able to notice things that perhaps other group members took for granted, such as norms of behaviour within the groups. It was also clear that the more I participated with a group, the more the group members appeared to feel more comfortable and act more naturally around me. As a group member, the researcher spends more time with the participants and gets to observe them in more varied situations. In some situations, participating eliminates the formality of interview schedules, however, within this study, interviews, and informal conversation were part of the ethnographic research process.

My ethnographic research with Tangled Rose became, by far, the most participatory and collaborative of the three groups. This may have been due to the temporality of the period during which this fieldwork took place: that being that the group actions were of a faster pace and rate of activity than the other groups. It may also have been due to

the informality of the group. My immersion in this group's activities developed over a number of weeks, to the point where I found myself with a small part in their pantomime. Being encouraged, through this small part, to attend *all* rehearsals, receive scripts, and text messages allowed me to view the activities, not only from an outsider's position, but also from the position of a trusted and valued member of the cast. However, the trust that developed and the friendships formed between the members and myself brought with it some downsides. While Oakley observed that close relationships within research allow trusts to be formed and relationships to be built, it was clear during the research process that those members of the group did not always fully understand my position as a researcher. There were times when I was treated as an equal member, which of course allowed me intimate viewing positions of group activities. However, I was also expected to participate fully as an equal member – taking on roles of set changes and being in charge of sound editing and production. This often meant that my note-taking was compromised. My position within the group became very clear during one of the pantomime rehearsals where one of the women had written a song for the performance. The song was written to include members of the pantomime and dance group, highlighting occasions of interest that had occurred throughout the year.

Maggie asked for oor help with her thesis
Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la
By the time she'd done, she'll be sick o' seeing us
Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la
We a' thought she'd make us famous
Fa-la-la, la-la-la, la-la-la
But noo she's singing in oor chorus
Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-lah.
(To the tune of 'Deck the halls')

I was pleasantly made aware of the shift in power structures between myself and the group. Many researchers attempt to reduce power inequalities. From the song lyrics, we

can see how my position within the group had shifted from 'my study' to 'their performance'. This shift in power structures helped develop strong relationships I was to have with the group of women, but within any group relationships there are difficulties: 'comparing, negotiating and reflecting on Self and Other' (Lassiter, 1998, p.8). Participatory researchers within their field of study should expect to experience these challenges as part of the democratic process of participatory research methodologies. It is a craft – aimed at transforming accepted ways of knowing, and identifying new objects of knowledge, but can constitute a major challenge in the democratic process.

6.4.1.1 Limitations

There are some obvious limitations to participatory observation and mixed methods, some of which I have mentioned above. It generates a vast amount of data which can be difficult for a novice researcher to decipher, and given the three different case studies within this research, this was a concern of mine. Kawulich (2005) also recognises that by participating in activities, the researcher can inadvertently influence the other participants' behaviour. Involvement with a new group can take some time for the members to accept the researcher and become comfortable with him or her. Given that my interest lay in the temporalities of volunteer groups, this time period of acceptance was of interest to me, allowing me some insight to group dynamics and the process of belonging.

6.4.2 Performance

Drama has the potential to produce 'research that works with local communities.... that a theatrical, artificial burlesque has the potential of coming closer to the pathos of social life than a more conventional approach to social research that can lack colour, complexity and humour (Foster, 2012, p.37). While I talk about the use of collaborative

methods, I have to bring to light the collaboration within women's civic engagement also – and how the use of pantomime is used by my group of pensioners. Pantomime is quite unique in its kind of stage performance in that the audience is encouraged to participate – and speak - and 'can be highly effective for communicating the emotional aspects of social life' (Leavy, 2009, p.13). My initial interest in this group was focused on exploring the temporalities of their pantomime activities, if indeed they considered themselves volunteers - and to explore their experiences of being part of a community group. However, as the fieldwork progressed and I became more involved with the participation of the activities as a cast member, I began to realise the potential of pantomime as a collaborative research method. This section will describe my experiences of being a cast member and my observations of the fieldwork.

In terms of participatory research, my position as a cast member – which was not planned – allowed me to not only observe the compromises, negotiations and discussions taking place, but to experience them – and also to experience the relationships between the cast; knowing each other's parts as well as their own – and how the script was developed from their interactions and conversations. This proved to be a turning point in my ethnographic study with this group. Relationships of this type necessarily entail 'comparing, negotiating and reflecting the self and others – and the joy of discovering how others worlds of meaning might differ, and correspond to one's own' (Lassiter, 1998, p.8). It allowed me an understanding that focused on experiencing the temporal and relational negotiations taking place – rather than interpreting it all from a distant academic position. I would never have gained that understanding had I not (progressed) into becoming a member of the cast.

I had been attending group rehearsals twice weekly for around four weeks. I had not begun interviews at this point as I wanted to build some kind of relationship with the group, and the women individually before doing so. I felt that building a rapport with the members would allow them some ease within the interview setting. My time with the

group to this point involved observing their activities, conversing with the women and the children and giving input into the development of the script if asked. I offered advice on other areas I knew about: sound editing, building props, and offered my thoughts on performance rehearsals with the others. I also video-recorded some performances on my phone so that the group could view the progress and get some idea of how this looked to an audience. I was also involved with helping to transport props in my car.

One Sunday afternoon while observing one of the scenes, a comedy sketch that involved singing, one of the women said that she did not feel confident enough to be part of this particular 'scene'. She had tried unsuccessfully to capture the tune, and became upset when others in the group were laughing. Her fellow group members looked rather taken aback when they realised how upset she was, and insisted that they weren't laughing at her, but instead at the obviousness of their (whole group) amateur status. None of the women could claim to be accomplished singers or actors, and while Gracie often claimed "I'm the guid singer", it was clear to everyone that she could not hold a note. Her claim of being a good singer was part of her comedy stage presence, and she revelled in this. However, not everyone enjoys being the butt of laughter, even when it is not meant maliciously, and the woman in question felt unable to carry on in this particular role. She did however remain a member of the cast and had two other small (non-singing) parts.

Gracie asked if I would stand in for the afternoon given that I had attended all the rehearsals and would know the words. With some hesitation I said that I would, but that I also was 'no singer'. I also tried to explain that while I attended all rehearsals, I was not always paying attention to the script, but rather my observations were focused on the activities of the group.

Gracie responded with 'You'll be fine – just do it today'. I agreed and took my place onstage. I threw myself into the part, trying not to be embarrassed when I forgot my cue, or lost the note, or the words. The song was rather 'saucy' (they're a saucy bunch of

women), and I tried not to give into my reservations and accept that I was going to have to 'make a bit of a fool of myself'. By the end of the scene rehearsal, I found myself more relaxed and able to have a good laugh at myself. It was actually quite liberating if I am honest.

At the next rehearsal, four days later, I was handed a bag containing some clothing and told 'Here's your costume. You're in the pantomime'. This was met by some cheering and laughter from the others in the group, and I wasn't quite sure of how to respond, but felt obliged to accept. I'm not sure whether my acceptance was down to my belief that one should give something back to participants if one can, or that these were older women and I had some duty of respect toward them, or if it was evidence of how easily it is to get pulled into something. Perhaps it was a bit of all three.

What was also interesting within this process was the shift in power structures between myself and group – so much so that even the participants became aware of it – and this was made clear to me in a song that one of them wrote for one of the performances. It was very interesting to encounter and experience, as a member of the group, the change in tempo as the performance date drew close. Tensions were high and the atmosphere of the rehearsal space grew 'thicker'. Conversations became faster and there appeared to be an increase in nervous laughter as they rehearsed together. Lines and routines were pushed through at an increased pace and costumes were tried on and altered with pins while others practiced their lines. There were tensions at times, as members either delivered or bore the brunt of sharp words as members' nervous anticipation increased. However, there was also a great deal of reciprocity, help and support for one another.

Creative projects are not linear processes. Within these pantomimes for example, the beginning and end are written first – and then the middle sections are developed to fit in. During the pantomime rehearsals the women discussed back and forth ideas for the script – and actively engaged in reworking the meanings, practices and boundaries of the

performance – and what they felt comfortable with. As these activities and discussions took place, ideas emerged, and the development of the storyline would take on a new meaning. It was quite fascinating to note how ideas that had been floated in the previous weeks, or ad-lib lines that had been thrown in, suddenly developed a new extended role in the storyline – allowing all the members to feel a sense of ownership of the project they were working on.

In addition to interviewing all the women in their own homes, I sat with them, rehearsed with them and joined in as they discussed the progress of the rehearsals and performance script. I discussed time with them, how they fitted things in – and what the pantomime meant to them. They gave me advice, suggested costume ideas for me, brought me costume items and materials and we discussed the meaning of these items – why they were chosen, their history and what they mean to women in today's society. We drew themes from the pantomime – age, localism, history of place, culture, gender, women's labour, their own skills - and how the pantomime reflected these areas, sometimes in ways that they hadn't noticed until I raised the issue. Their skills in needlework, creative arts, and writing were discussed and I asked how these skills might be shared with others – and what the benefits of this might be. These conversations led to discussions about current education systems, lack of support for community groups – the young and the more elderly, and the lack of support for funding for groups that are struggling. While their pantomime may on the surface appear as a simple form of entertainment for local residents, it is essentially the testimony of the lives of these women: their social landscape, their hopes and dreams and experiences – and It encapsulates, in places, many of the stories and experiences that were shared during the course of the research.

Some of the women spoke of coming up with ideas at home, taking mental notes and returning to the group with them. Simultaneously, as the story developed during the rehearsal space, ideas about costumes and stage designs emerged also. One of the

members told me that some of her ideas come to her at night when she is in bed. This overlapping of time between private and public time can make it quite difficult to know just how much work goes into organising such events. Callaghan (2011) highlights how these 'below the radar' activities bring to light the conversations, meetings, and informal activities that take place over a number of months in order to create a singular event.

The performances reached a wide, varied audience as well as involving three generations of the same family in the group. The performances were activities that often proved 'uplifting and rewarding' (Foster, 2012, p.38) for cast and audience. It is a truly collaborative practice, that shifts and adapts over a process of time leading up to the performance. It should be added that these women have no training, yet have, through skill sharing, learned to produce these annual stage productions that benefit a wide audience – from local families to nursing home residents. Collaborations of this kind which span generations are a valuable way to learn skills and appreciation for others in the community, and activities shared between the elderly and young children can be valuable and hugely worthwhile. Nevertheless, they can at times cause tensions within the groups given the varying energy levels and the ability to self-regulate behaviour when children are very young. Whether in community groups or collaborative research, these 'co-creations' also rely on 'co-operative relations' (Lassiter, 2008, p.73), and it can prove 'challenging working with people from different disciplines and communities who have different expectations' of you (Rasool, 2017, p.319). Researchers often struggle with issues of power – and should be aware of their own, and participants' vulnerabilities (Dodson et al., 2007, p.822). This was something that I experienced as I grappled with my position as cast member and researcher. As a cast member I was expected to participate fully in the performances and 'duties' of a member of the group (generally helping out). There were times when this inhibited my role as researcher, especially if I was busy with props or helping the children and unable to observe fully what other things were going on.

However, my unexpected position as a cast member allowed me to not only observe the compromises, negotiations and discussions taking place, but to experience them – while also experiencing the relationships between the cast: the learning of each other's parts as well as their own – and the ways in which the script developed from the members' interactions and conversations. There was a vulnerability to being treated as a member of the cast: being told off when being in the wrong stage position or forgetting my lines, or not editing the sound as requested. This proved to be a turning point in my collaboration with this group. It allowed me an understanding that focused on experiencing the temporal and relational negotiations taking place – rather than interpreting it all from a distant academic position.

I might never have gained that understanding had I not progressed to becoming a performing member of the cast. The methods within this pantomime, as well as the reflections and discussions of participants about the scenes allow for an enactment of differences and conflicts, as well as recognition of shared experiences. Much ethnography employs an 'academically positioned logic that yields patterned distant and normalized voices' (Lassiter, 1998, p.7) and which often quite different to negotiations between friends, however, in methods such as these, and in the relationships that develop, distances narrow and issues of trust, confidence and power structures can be overcome.

Ongoing friendships and dialogue with my participants around the documentation of their pantomime allow one to reflect on this position – and ask ongoing questions about the research. The pantomime was a collaborative accomplishment that address issues of power in production of these documents. The pantomime was written and developed by all the of members, and the video document by involving students from a local college – but within this, were hours of discussion, democratic decision making, agreements and tensions. The dvd itself provided further opportunity for community events – with a 'premiere' showing for members of cast and their families, and to act as an archive of

their community endeavours. The women in this pantomime offer some insight to cultural resources that are available to older people to help them construct meaningful futures.

6.5 Poetry

While exploring what time is to the individual in the community, how do we also recognise temporalities in relation to research methods, and what the democratisation of knowledge about communities means in practice? How can we capture the temporality of women's lives, and what methods are available to researchers to allow them to work with groups of women in ways that are collaborative and inclusive? Karen Davis and Valerie Bryson (amongst many others) have questioned the usefulness of traditional time use studies in being able to capture the complicated 'patchwork quilt lives' of women (Bryson, 2007; Davies, 1990). New forms of knowledge are emerging through creative research methods: opening opportunities for voices to be heard that have previously been marginalised, and making it possible for these views to be expressed.

There is a growing interest in the use of creative, or arts-based methods within community research that is opening a space outside of the boundaries of traditional methods of data gathering; a space that improves the 'critical attentiveness, collaboration and experimentation' (Back and Puwar, 2012) of both data gathering and dissemination of analysis. The particular approach used in this study is an arts-based methodology using poetry: one that fits well within a community development approach to the co-production of research. Combined with a feminist perspective, this has strong potential for collaborative co-produced research. Methodologies such as poetry are empowering and congruent with a mode of being and understanding that values voice and people's own creative potential

Poetry surrounds itself with time – in its repetitive, rhyming, pausing, stopping, pondering nature, and in the temporalities held within the creative process of writing poetry. In a framework of private/public dichotomies, where women’s civic engagement and temporal experiences could be suggested to still circulate around the private – even when concerned with the public, poetry might allow those personal experiences, spoken by women themselves, to reveal the purposeful, public nature of their work, while also reflecting the overlapping multiplicities of time connected to the home. As a complementary method to interviews and ethnographic study, poetry seeks to reveal the diversity of people, emphasising the complexities of lived experiences, allowing voices to be heard, and “captur[ing] the essence of the how, the why, the what” (Carroll, et al., 2011, p.264).

As an ‘engaged method of writing that evokes emotion and promotes human connection and understanding, [poetry] can capture a unique aspect of the human condition, thereby expanding our understanding of social reality’ (Leavy, 2009). Its use of ‘familiar’ language can reach into the heart of its readers and break down barriers in its ability to produce shared understanding. In addition to allowing the researcher the opportunity to gather more in-depth data, the creative ‘space’ can allow participants to direct the conversation, and allow them to position their experiences within wider aspects of women’s position in society (ibid).

While several of the Imagine projects (Imagine, 2015) are situated within the ethos of research being co-produced by participants from the beginning, my own project, being a pre-determined PhD, is more nuanced with regard to collaboration. It does however attempt to highlight, as Eric Lassiter states, ‘the gap between the academically positioned and the community-positioned narrative’. Lassiter’s concern here is about the power and politics of representation; about ‘who has the right to represent whom and for what purposes and about whose discourse will be privileged in the ethnographic text’ (2005, p.4). Research is told and understood in different ways. Formal data sets tell one

side of a story about communities, but by looking at how time in the community affects even one woman, or one organisation well, these narratives are really important.

Rethinking whether all members of communities are equally well-represented has led to experimentation with methods such as poetry. Poetry, itself is embedded in time – in its repetitive, rhyming, pausing, stopping, pondering nature; in the temporalities held within the creating process of writing poetry. The use of poetry within the research process varied, from having participants write their own poetry through the use of instructive exercises within workshop settings, to methods (such as narrative poetry), where the researcher takes direct conversation and recreates it in poetic form. I have also included some of my own poetry in this thesis and in the accompanying booklet of poetry. The idea of narrative poetry has also been labelled ‘research poetry’ and ‘interpretive poetry’ (Langer and Furman, 2004), ‘investigative poetry’ (Hartnett, 2003) and ‘ethnographic poetics’ (Brady, 2004; Denzin, 1997; Lassiter et al., 2004).

Poetic transcription of this kind can be useful in presenting certain types of speech that are not easily rendered on the written page. Used in this way, selected words and phrases from recorded interview data become the foundation of the poetry and so, this approach also uses speech patterns which can somewhat capture the soft nuances of speech – the quiet hesitation, irony, and shifts in a voice (Faulkner, 2005). It captures and translates the intent as well as the content of the speech.

Patricia Leavy suggests that poetry provides a space to represent data that pays attention to “multiple meaning, identity work and subjugated perspectives” (2009, p.64) and allows for a potential to make our findings, even if condensed in nature, more accessible, and to convey the complexities of social reality. Much in the same way that one would familiarise oneself by the reading and re-reading of data, the act of crafting and revising that takes place during and after a poem is written, and/or the subsequent return to the work and reflection upon it help to clarify its meaning (Cahnmann, 2003).

6.5.1 Poetry workshops

The women from the WFI organisations were the only group to participate in the poetry workshops. We organised two workshops, around six months apart: one in December 2015 and another in April 2016. My time with the group prior to the workshops was spent embedded in their local projects, discussions, and monthly meetings, jotting fieldnotes and recording conversations during our time together. However, there were aspects of their activities, so embedded in their everyday lives, that were difficult to get at: routines and everyday practices that become so habitual that they are difficult to identify through the use of traditional research methods, and while there were co-produced projects taking place between myself and the group members, I reflected on the use of poetry in previous studies and I felt that it might be a suitable method to tease out some of the realities and emotional pressures that may be associated with busy women's lives.

6.5.2 Preparing the workshops

As with any kind of collaborative research, the engagement process can often take some time to get off the ground. Trust and confidence have to be built and gained before one can engage people in any kind of collaborating process. I spent some time participating with this group: attending their meetings, and participating with their online discussions and engaging fully with many of their local projects. During this period, I had raised the idea of having a poetry workshop. I also suggested that a book of written poetry could be a way of publicising what they do to a wider audience, while also offering further opportunity for informal collaborative engagement as a means of dialogue sharing and discussion.

The process of our previous collaborations allowed us all to get to know one another, to feel comfortable with each other, and (when it came to conducting the workshop), to take seats around an equal table, and engage in the creative process of poetry making.

We spoke for several weeks beforehand about what might be expected, discussing fears and concerns, and what kind of space might be most suitable for the event, suitable times, and dates – and whether we should have food.

I often find, when offering poetry workshops to both children and adults, that adults are (initially) more uncomfortable with creative methods of this type. Whenever I ask a child if they can draw/paint/write a poem, they will most commonly answer ‘Yes’. Whenever I ask an adult the same question, more often than not, the answer I will receive is ‘No’. However, creative activities are simply tools that encourage us to use our imaginations and to think differently about our experiences in the world in which we live. Yet, it would appear that somewhere along the way, from childhood to adulthood, many of us lose the confidence to imagine and to think differently. Acknowledging this concern, I was able to break down some of the barriers of fear and encourage members of the group to attend the workshop. Food always helps too, so a venue with a kitchen where we could prepare and heat up food was agreed upon, and a date for the first poetry workshop was set.

6.5.3 Writing the poems

Given that the participants in this group knew each other, and had gotten to know me quite well, the women were being asked to exclusively compose their own poetry using exercises I had prepared (appendices 2-4). These creative exercises were offered to act as a way to extract data relating to the participants’ lived experiences of community activism and volunteering – and to allow a unique view of these women’s lives. They were given the opportunity to lead and offer changes to the planned event and offered a variety of ‘exercises’ to choose from. Ice-breaker exercises, examples of poetry and guidance on writing poetry was offered, but more importantly was the access to a

temporal creative space that allows for pondering, thoughtful dialogue to take place – where trust can be formed, and silenced voices can be heard.

One of the exercises employed within the workshop asked the women to write some poetry using a template of 'I AM' (appendix 3.3). These types of templates are often used within poetry and writing workshops, and while the template might suggest over similarities within results – this is typically not the case. The women are writing from their situated positions, as embodied women, and they are writing in the first person. Their poems are highly personal and yet they are designed to have a public function in this research.

The workshop setting allowed the women to direct the conversation, often branching off from their volunteering and activism to wider aspects of temporal negotiations.

Writing poetry isn't easy, it can be fun, but there is understandably reluctance to begin with. It takes time to trust - even those we know. The creative process can reveal laughter, aspiration and compassion, mixed with fierceness, disappointment, and despair.

I am changing yet still the same
Wondering what the camera really sees
As the shutter clicks the image disappears,
And then returns
Capturing this moment forever
I feel it passing too quickly, and too slowly
The keys inside my pocket
Tell me I'll be late - and I worry
Silently
Understanding hope and fear
Should be embraced.
I dream of them like painted effects
The soft muted edges blending
Like futures in beautiful colours

I have changed, yet I am
Still the same
(Narrative poetry: M. Laidlaw)

The poem above was written following an event with the WFI group as they marched together for Gay Pride. Cameras captured the colourful banners and hand-made thistle button-holes. Excited chatter centred around the day and the group support for the event, however other conversations could be heard as the women shared political hopes and concerns of the future. They spoke of the changes they felt within themselves – empowered by the group – but remaining unchanged in many ways by the socio-political position of women in society. One woman was running late for the event – turning up harassed and out of breath. Another walked with another group – torn between her loyalties to both. The poem is not meant to analyse the event, but to give some background to the ways in which poetry can bring to light events within ethnographic fieldwork.

Returning to the workshop – each of the women were asked to read their poems out to the others in the group. Initially, there were fears and concerns of embarrassment, however those concerns were quickly overcome. Working within the group, the women created their poems as individuals, however, they also bounced ideas off each other – and I was aware that while others were reciting their own poetry, others were re-writing theirs, with cries of “oh, that’s given me an idea!”

I always provide pencils with rubber tips, so that changes can easily be made, and during the reciting of the poetry, the audible indication of graphite being erased and words re-written made a welcome sound. It surely was a sign of the imaginative process at work with newly-emerging ideas, and of the collaborative nature of the group endeavour: each women’s poem was, in a sense, connected with the others in the group as ideas and inspirations were shared.

It was during the reciting of the poetry that discussion emerged from the content of each poem. The women present would comment on the detail within the poem, expanding and sharing their own similar experiences. Others chose not to share their poems, wishing instead to take them home to re-work them. They did however offer a line or two and provide a background for the compositions. These were collaborative processes, and a reminder that research should be adaptable to participants' needs and wishes. In addition to allowing the researcher the opportunity to gather more in-depth data, the poetry-making workshops allowed participants to reposition their experiences by offering support to each other in a wider sense of socio-political perspectives.

The poetry workshops allowed everyone to find the poet inside them, and to have the courage to read their poems, and it was fascinating to note the temporalities within poetry; the stopping, pausing, patterns that took place within each poem. The shape the poem took to tell its story: as the beginning progressed on its journey before circling to an end.

What was particularly interesting about the women's poetry was that although each poem was different, they were all very similar in terms of 'poignant' memories or fears, and developing a strength from this into success or progressing towards success. There was a lovely circular element to all the poetry – with memories and experiences emerging almost organically from the individual to the paper (through the pencil). The words inside the brackets (from template) help to develop a skeleton from which the poem can be developed further (or left how it stands).

I am

(I am) orange. Change and changing
(I wonder), 'will there be enough time?'
(I hear) quiet. Less than before
(I see) a hill, part climbed
(I want) to be noticed

(I am) orange, change and changing
(I pretend) that it's already happening
(I feel) a purple readiness
(I touch) with all my being
(I worry) the momentum will be lost
(I cry) when needs are not met
(I understand) the fear and uncertainty
(I say) I want equality
(I dream) of differences being embraced and accepted
(I try) to contribute and be informed and grow
(I hope) for a different way if being
(I am) orange, change and changing.
Mary, WFI 2016

In 2015 I attended a talk by Howard Becker, where he told the audience that sociological research often has two main questions: 'What brought you here?', and 'what happened next?'. It struck me that research poetry allows these very questions to be asked and expanded on in a similarly open fashion. The researcher is not leading with predesigned questions, but leaving a space where participants can share their own meaning and experiences to particular topics of inquiry. The participatory nature of poetry workshop events, allow understandings to be shared, and memories stirred. The writer is taking control, especially of their own experiences, memories, inspirations and ideas of self.

Using elements of poetry within the research process allows for a potential to make our findings more accessible and to convey the "complexity of the observed world" (Cahnmann, 2003, p34). It allows both researcher and participants to act on emerging data, rather than 'simply reflecting reality' (Back and Puwar, 2012). Although findings may be condensed in poetic form, this potentially augments its ability to help audiences connect with aspects of the author's social reality (Leavy, 2005, p.68). In poetry, it's often

about what we leave out, as much as what we put into the poem. The reader will fill in with emotion – which allows a personal connection to take place.

6.5.4 Further benefits

Ongoing friendships and dialogue with my participants around the documentation of their poetry allowed me to reflect on my position – and ask ongoing questions about the research. The poetry was a collaborative accomplishment that addresses issues of power in the production of these documents. The poetry was written and developed by the women in the group, but within this, were also hours of discussion, democratic decision making, agreements and tensions. Collaborative engagements of this kind can also provide further opportunity for community events – and act as archives of their community endeavours. Their poems allow us all an insight to their lives as activists: their hopes, dreams, and their realities. It could be said that the poetry that emerged during the workshops offered an alternative insight into the lives of these female activists. Samples of the booklet were shared with the group on their private group page, where the women were able to request changes to the layout, names, images. Any exhibiting of the poetry booklets was not done until these agreed amendments were finalised. Their booklet of poetry is a document of the hours, days and months of work that are part of their community engagement. Their book of poetry (Figure 1) was used as an example of collaborative research at an Imagine ‘findings-sharing’ event in London in 2016 (Imagine, 2016). Interestingly, at the end of the event, the book of poetry was nowhere to be found. Someone had clearly found it intriguing.

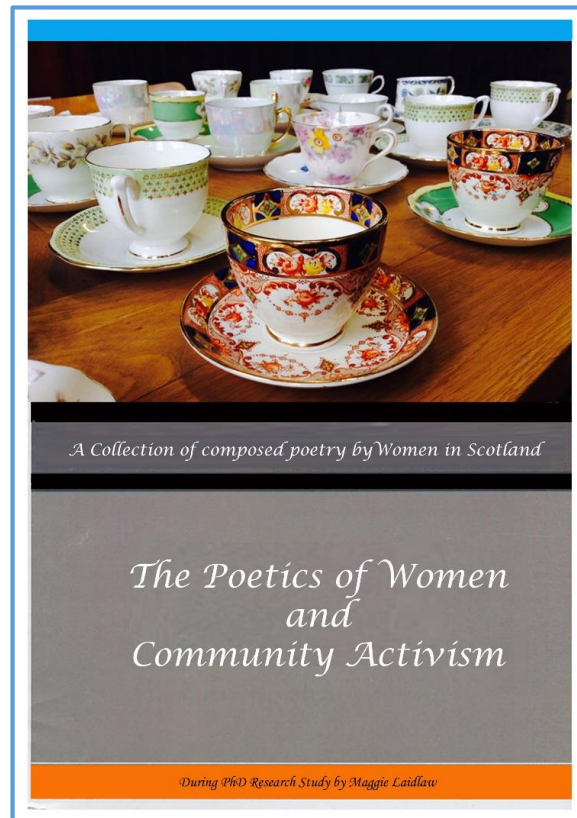


Figure 1: Booklet of poetry

6.6 Collaborative Writing: Ailish

The volunteers at Rape Crisis did not feel able to commit the time to any of the poetry workshops. Both the volunteer co-ordinator and myself advertised an event by email, in person (at training events) and with posters. There was very little response from volunteers and management felt it would be better to cancel. Ailish, however, was keen to be involved in some collaborative writing (Appendix 5).

She said our discussions had prompted her to reflect on what being part of the organization meant to her and the gradual process of change in her understanding of

social activism, and of her identity and time. The following appendix (5) is Ailish's own words and a reflection of her own identity, and our conversations about the research. I have Ailish's permission to use her own name. It is her writing, her time, her reflection of herself and her voluntary work, and therefore should be credited to her.

There is a parallel to Ailish's writing to that in which soldiers often speak about taking risks, or putting their life on the line, for the benefit of their platoon or squadron – and not for the 'big cause' for which they are fighting: she is part of a community of women who are united by a struggle against the patriarchy, but it is also the relationships, the interconnectedness between and within the group, that drive her and keep her there. There is a sense of shared generosity noted in Ailish's writing about the centre: She writes passionately, and with affection. Writing with substance about the centre and its workers that defy the culturally informed habits of perceptions and judgments that perpetuate injustices. There is a history and a future shown within her understanding of the centre; It is a symbol of social time where these past and future dimensions meet in the present and adapt by continually transforming, while still remaining solid and safe and recognisable to those who belong to it.

This example of collaborative writing, and allowing Ailish the opportunity to write her own words and experiences in, what is my study, is strikingly different from many traditional methods. It challenges the 'power and politics of research' (Lassiter, 2005 p4) and focuses on 'interpretations that are collectively derived and writing descriptions that are multivocal' (Lassiter, 1998, p.11). While Ailish wrote this piece on her own, discussions took place beforehand of what she and I thought might be useful to the study. The text, written by Ailish, is a product of an on-going process of conversation and reflection, and helps to reveal alternatives to my own interpretations of knowing. I am grateful to Ailish for taking the time to reflect on our conversations and to compose her piece of writing. She was juggling a great many other things at the time, and I understand

that some of those activities were put on hold so that she might participate in this piece of writing. It is important that it has a place in this thesis.

6.7 Diaries

Diary methods are being increasingly used in social research. Bartlett and Milligan (2015) discuss a whole range of diary methods: from traditional use to engaging with new and novel developments such as digital devices, social media and blogging. Diaries allow research participants opportunity to provide regular accounts on the events and experiences of their daily lives in their own words, 'capturing life as lived' (Bolger et al., 2003).

Small blank diaries and pencils were given to all participants of the study along with diary information sheets (appendix 2.5). The women in the study were asked to record their daily activities, especially those days when they were volunteering: How they felt before going and after they returned home. Participants were asked to include tasks related to their voluntary work that they carried out at home: making costumes, administrative work, organising of events, script rehearsals. They were also asked to include anything they thought might impact on their ability to fit their volunteering around their employment/family/leisure time. Participants were informed that they did not have to write pages of information, but invited to write as little or as much as they felt happy with. Participants were also informed that they could keep a diary on their computer or audio record via their phones.

Four out of the thirty-one participants completed a diary. A number refused to participate in this method, knowing they wouldn't have time, and the others forgot to complete a diary – some forgetting I had even given one to them. This did not surprise me given how busy these women were. I made a conscious decision not to remind

women about the diaries throughout the field work as I was aware of how busy they were, and I did not want to coerce them in any way.

The entries from the four diaries varied from short entries consisting of a few sentences, to detailed events, discussing daily activities, contemplation of events, sketches and diagrams. While this was not one of the more successful methods utilised in this study, the diaries that were completed still provided useful data.

6.8 Ethical Approaches

This research project was conducted with full compliance of research ethics standards, with particular observation given to the codes and practices recognised by the British Sociological Association's Statement of Ethical Practice BSA, (2002) and the ESRC Research Ethics Policy (ESRC, 2015a). Every research participant was given a 'participant information sheet' that outlined the details of the study. The following key principles in research were identified via the Research Ethics Guidebook (Boddy et al., 2015) and the British Sociological Association's Statement of Ethical Practice (BSA, 2002). I also complied with The University of Edinburgh's Ethics Policy, the ESRC framework for research ethics (ESRC, 2015a), and the British Sociological Association's Statement of Ethical Practice (BSA, 2002).

Key Principles

1. **Worthwhileness:** Included within research ethics is assurance that the research is worth doing. Participants contribute their time to assist in research studies, and so research projects should be of a standard of integrity and quality that are not likely to waste people's time. Funders require assurance that their financial contributions are worthwhile and that the research should aim to have impact within public, policy or

academic fields. With regard to this I would suggest that this research is feasible and worthwhile, and that methods were chosen to provide valid answers to the research question, and to allow participants' voices to be heard.

2. Written documents outlining details of purpose, funding, methods and intended possible uses of the research were offered to all participants before study took place. Permission was obtained from organisations, and copyright of any organisations will be upheld.

3. Confidentiality was maintained at all times, and pseudonyms were offered to all participants. In the case of shared spaces such as group interviews or workshops, there is always a risk of members of the groups breaking confidentiality, but as this study includes no sensitive or controversial content, this is not likely to be of great concern. The only area where sensitive issues might be discussed would be within conversation with volunteers from Rape Crisis – perhaps within the area surrounding motivation to be a volunteer with the organisation. However, Rape Crisis workers are highly trained in boundary work and confidentiality, so although I am aware of risk within this group setting, I did not feel any undue concern regarding break-downs in confidentiality with this group of women. Information supplied by participants was held within a password-protected computer and university online filing system and encrypted external hard drive. All recording devices were kept in a secure cabinet between interviews.

4. Valid Consent: Participants were not coerced or persuaded to participate - They were not offered bribes (although they were offered travel expenses if necessary). All participants had the capacity to make the decision to be involved; and their consent was fully informed through discussion with each participant (ESRC, 2015a; Wiles, 2013). Consent for the children, mentioned briefly in the study, was given via their parents. The children and their parents were also asked if I could use their drawings, and if they were

happy having photographs taken. Both children and parents were asked for consent in the video recording of the pantomime performance.

5. Co-ownership of any composed creative works. Any works publicly displayed or disseminated included any (agreed upon) participant's names. All creative works, whether written by participants, or by the researcher were offered to research participants for approval before printing, publishing or exhibition.

Throughout this study, ethical decisions were made on the 'basis of care, compassion and a desire to act in ways that benefit the individual and organisations' who are a focus of this research, 'recognising the relationality and interdependency of researcher and research participants' (Wiles, 2013. p. 15).

All participants were given pseudonyms, and personal details such as addresses and towns and cities where organisation were situated were omitted from the study. Ages of participants are given in appendices. I am aware of the history of 'exclud[ing] women from authorship and ownership of their own words' (Moore, 2012, p.332), and while protecting participants, I also endeavour not to render people nameless if they choose to be visible. While the anonymization of names within the thesis was agreed upon by participants, some were keen (not all) to have their poetry credited with their own names. It was agreed that this would be done through the use of initials. The recorded pantomime, created on behalf of the dance group, and the booklet of poetry, created by the WFI group also contain some identifiers. However, these documents are not for my dissemination, and any use I make of them (presentations or conferences) must be with the consent of participants and with the assurance that they are only viewed by the attendees of academic related events).

Tangled Rose were keen for me 'to make them famous' and while I could not promise to do this, especially within the realm of confidentiality of participants, I did offer to help them publicise their group endeavours. The dvd of their pantomime, and 'film-premiere'

viewing of the recorded performance in their community was an attempt to do so. The confidential nature of group identity used within this study may be revisited in the future with regard to further writings of the use of poetry and performance in research, but this will only be done with the full consent of the participants.

6.9 Analysis

What to do with all of the data we collect is often an area of concern for researchers. Text books often talk about abstracting up and down but rarely give detail of how the analysis is carried out. Given that I was dealing with so many theories (time; community; gender; volunteering), and three separate case study groups, it was difficult to keep track of everything and my desk was often covered with post-it notes, piles of paper, and notes scribbled down on the go on the back of an article, compiling these was difficult. I used an Evernote phone/computer app for note-taking on-the-go, and during writing up I also used Scrivener as a tool for keeping memo's and notes and for help with structuring the thesis. Immersion in the material is a must, but in addition to reading, and re-reading, listening and re-listening, I also returned to my research participants: asking for clarification, and seeking opportunity for further discussion so that I could make sense of my findings.

6.9.1 Making sense of the data

The study made use of grounded analysis – meaning that the analysis did not start from a defined point, but allowed the data to ‘speak for itself’ with themes emerging from the discussions, conversation, interviews, observations and poetry. While I entered the field with specific questions, my interactions and developing relationships with the women in

the study prompted me to shift my understanding as themes developed from my observations and from the gathered data.

Making sense of the data was ongoing: reflecting on conversations, interviews, fieldnotes and even sketches I had made of events. Interviews were not all fully transcribed. Given my dyslexia, it was more beneficial for me to listen to the recordings and take notes – and then listen to them again, and again. This allowed me to note the nuances of the voices: quiet hesitation, irony, laughter and pauses – and to make sense of these. The participant observation also allowed for notes to be made on relationships, body language and the embodied responses of participants within their settings. Reflecting on these fieldnotes allowed themes to emerge and for an understanding of these themes to develop as a process.

6.8.1.1 The process of analysis

Before the process of analysis could begin, the data had to be organised and I used NVivo 11 computer software for this. I used the software as a filing system for primary sources (literature review) to begin with. As the study progressed, interview notes and transcripts and fieldnotes were imported for coding use. I have previously used NVivo for coding for the creation of narrative poetry, but restrictions of time prevented this within this thesis. I also used Evernote for note-taking or capturing images and audio. Evernote allows tags to be attached alongside these methods of recording, which helps with the challenges of labelling data when on-the-go.

The initial phase of data analysis is to organise the data and this was done using categories of themes. The first step towards classifying involves familiarising oneself with the data. Familiarisation can include data reduction, transcription, reading, and any other effort that may involve gaining some coherent understanding of what the data is

saying” (Lee and Fielding, 1991). This involved me listening/reading back through the interviews/transcriptions and reducing each interview to areas of interest. Researchers make choices about what to include in the transcription process and should give details to validate their decisions regarding inclusion and exclusion (Lapadat and Lindsay, 1999). My own decisions of inclusion/exclusion were focused on what I felt was relevant to the study, and areas of confidentiality. Second and third ‘readings’⁴ allowed me to loosely apply descriptive coding. Avoiding the temptation to lift interesting words and phrases from the text in an intuitive manner at this early stage was something I had to work quite determinedly on, and so I focused myself on noting ideas while critiquing the data from this perspective. My aim at this stage was to find and identify new things: create a coding frame with a list of things I was interested in, and look for connections between the codes and patterns emerging from the data (Fielding and Lee, 1998; Thorne, 2000).

This preliminary analysis stage is about identifying important concepts or themes in the data. ‘Thematic analysis’ can be described as another form of data reduction and is an important part of analytical approaches, however it should be noted that analysis was ongoing throughout the research process (Fielding and Lee, 1998; Thorne, 2000). While I may have had some apriori themes in mind, it was only by immersing myself in the data, and continuing to be ‘close to’ my research participants, that key thematic ideas became clear and connections and patterns between these codes emerged. Being a visual person, and also having dyslexia, I also found it easier to combine this method with physical post-it notes on a large-scale wall mind map. I enjoy the physicality of moving things around and so found myself moving between this approach and NVivo in order to organise my thoughts and categories. Apriori themes come from previously studied

⁴ The term ‘readings’ here also includes listening to recorded interviews.

definitions found in literature reviews and from 'researchers' values, theoretical orientations, and personal experiences' (Bulmer, 1979 cited in Ryan and Bernard, 2003, p.88). Without these basic themes with which to start, researchers would not be able to (a) chose a sample groups or (b) know what questions to ask (ibid, 2003).

Having created the initial set of coded themes, I returned to my codes and set about organising them into hierarchical coding (tree coding). For example; belonging; routine; relationships; self; synchronising. The themes emerged as patterns that I could identify, and that I could categorise into 'chunks' (Fielding and Lee, 1998, p.5). From here I was beginning to identify a narrative and where the four main chapter areas began to emerge: Organisations; Family, friends, and others; Self; Non-human, and the analytical themes of negotiation, and Elias's we-I balance and restraint were identified.

6.8.1.2 Advantages and Disadvantages of using NVivo

Passive coding is a particular problem associated with using any software that makes the coding process easier. Using physical wall mind maps helped me to distinguish my themes in while using the coding tools within NVivo, and a slight up-glance at my wall mind map reminded me of my intent when I felt my coding was becoming a little thoughtless. The appeal of NVivo includes its "speed, efficiency [and] rigour" (Richards, 2002, p.274), and makes easier the areas where coding overlaps within a sentence or paragraph: where two codes sit within the same chunk of text. Using NVivo for this process allowed me to easily highlight themes I was looking for, and to store them in an organised efficient manner (which is enormously useful for a dyslexic brain). Combining digital software with artistic methods allowed for an interesting juxtaposition of methods which helped keep the research process alert and alive, and allowed for reflection throughout the process.

Having said that, returning to discussion around the distancing from data that software tools are guilty of, there were times when I felt distanced from both the data and the creative process of writing while immersed with the software. Difficulties associated with visual processing (and the small viewing boxes of NVivo) made immersion in the data difficult at times. To alleviate this, I extracted the coded themes into a word document. Nevertheless, in terms of coding, word searches and queries used, NVivo did allow some level of 'closeness' with the data (Fielding and Lee, 1998, p.7), and an interconnectedness through the ability to easily trace the process, and source the data via NVivo's filing system.

The variety of methods used in this study prompts questions around how one might draw on the poetry, interviews and observations to come up with a single line of interpretations. Ethnographic fieldwork is very subjective in what one sees, or doesn't see, and how one interprets what is going on. Interviews have a similar element of subjectivity. However, the interpretation of poetry might be more of an art than a science in understanding what someone means by their poem. At times there was a distinct difference in what was being said (or not said) in the interview and what was being said in the poetry, e.g. the 'I am Mad as Hell' poem, so these methods complement each other by 'casting light' (Mason, 2011, p. 77) on specific concerns within the research. All techniques of data analysis help researchers see their data in a new light, and each has its advantages and disadvantages. However, we are rarely allowed access to details of how researchers come to pinpoint the themes they discuss in their articles (Ryan and Bernard, 2003). Researchers often 'read only certain authors and remain quite ignorant of analysis purposes and procedures different from the ones their favourite methodological writers describe' (Tesch, 1990, p.115). Mason's 'Facet Methodology' (2011) highlights the value in taking risks with combining very different methods, but also the difficulties involved in pulling together creative and traditional methods. The complementary element using these methods together is that 'each are capable of

casting and refracting light in a variety of ways that help to define the overall object of concern' (Mason, 2011, p. 80).

While I found Elias's analytical framework useful, Elias and Scotson (and Elias's other works) reveal very little about how they arrived at their line of argument. Elias does not provide a full account of his way of working, so although his concepts have been useful in this study, they were not helpful in how to turn fieldwork data into an analytical narrative. In contrast, Finch and Mason's (1993) discussion of their study's methodological underpinnings proved very useful for thinking about the analysis of my own data on 'negotiation'.

6.10 Impact

This research highlights some of the ways that community engagement is being accessed by women, and how attention might be paid to the pace and speed of community building. In terms of research impact, using methods that complement each other, such as interviews, performance and poetic prose, can allow for findings to be presented in various forms of significance for different academic, policy, and public settings. As part of the 'Imagine' (Imagine, 2015) and 'Connected Communities' (2014) programmes, this research project supports the ESRC and RCUK 'pathways to impact' (ESRC, 2015b; RCUK, 2014). The research should impact on third sector organisations and policy makers, academics and artists, local community members and the participants themselves. I have also discussed some of the positive impact I experienced from being part of the Imagine programme in section 6.1: Imagine of this thesis.

Communities and individuals are entitled to a stake in the knowledge that academics help uncover, and methods such as some of those used in this study allow for this knowledge-sharing. This sharing of knowledge allows individuals and communities to be empowered and through the process, make visible new kinds of knowledge that can be

articulated and heard in new ways. This process can promote ways for communities and groups to collectively construct new futures. Through the Imagine and Connected Communities websites and newsletters, users from various spectrums will have the opportunity to access this research project, and therefore gain information about this study.

6.11 Chapter Summary

These modes of engagement seek the participants' responses as a way to open new conversations. However different from conventional ethnographies, collaborations of this type are not at odds with ultimate goals within research – to produce meaningful understandings of cultural diversity and to reveal alternatives to our own ways of being. In that sense, the poetry and pantomime discussed here are not simply the documented forms of ethnography. The data include not only these but also observations and the comments of participants that came out of these being produced.

These methods offer a means to present findings in various forms of significance for different academic, policy, and public settings. They can help the researcher find hidden significance and 'act on' the emerging data, re-vitalise the research, and make the findings public in a way that allows the audience to access the data differently. They also allow opportunity for further collaborations and opportunity to extend these through 'established networks in which knowledge cascades down from one organization or individual to another, thus creating a ripple effect' (Rasool, 2017, p.314). As Lassiter notes, in most ethnographies, 'interpretations – however they are reached – end with the written text. Collaborative practices take research one step further by seeking participants' responses to the text as a way to begin dialogues anew' (Lassiter, 1998, p.11). Examining oneself, and issues of power and control within collaborative methods

may also highlight problems associated with dominant aspects of time within communities.

Combinations of methods, while messy and time consuming, are important in community research because ‘people who do have something in common, may not necessarily have everything in common’ (Crow, 2014. 44.38 min), and so if we want to find out those different types of things that people have in common, then we benefit from using a variety of different methods. Members of groups may wish to have different levels of involvement due to different time restrictions, levels of energy, skills, physical abilities, and even confidence, and so a blanket idea of co-production as ‘everyone involved in every part’ is arguably in tension with equality of participation. My participants showed quite different ways of ‘co-creating’ projects that involved many members, but with various levels of engagement. These different levels of participation would not have fitted equally with more traditional methods – as we saw within the interviews with RC volunteers.

Ongoing friendships and dialogue with my participants around the documentation of their poetry allowed me to reflect on my position – and ask ongoing questions about the research. The poetry and pantomime were collaborative accomplishments that address issues of power in the production of these documents. Both were developed by the women in the group, but within this there were also hours of discussion, democratic decision-making, agreements and tensions. Collaborative engagements of this kind can also provide further opportunity for community events – and act as archives of their community endeavours. Methodology is always a challenge but it was approached in a way that tried to be as inclusive as possible. In the following chapters we can see how that played out in practice.

7. Introduction to data chapters

“By exploring problems of time one can find out a good deal about human beings” (Elias, 1992, p.1)

The argument of the thesis is that we as individuals cannot freely choose how to use our time, and that in the context of various constraints on their choices, women have to negotiate with others, and also with themselves, about time. The data are revealing of how an individual's specific position in society influences how their time may be used and what powers they have within these negotiations. This suggests that time exists on different levels, and this is being reflected in the diversity of ways in which women in this study engage with causes that benefit themselves, their families, and the wider community, but also in the ways that they are, at times, restricted in their engagement with these same causes.

The study is identifying that volunteers are not just people with lots of free time, nor those who go into it and then quickly realise they are over committed, and withdraw. It shows that those who make a go of it are people who manage to negotiate their time and do so through negotiations with the organisation, intimate others, self and technology in order to facilitate that participation.

In chapter eight, *Have you got time for this?*, I will look at how groups co-ordinate, synchronize, and sequence actions. Exploring the ways in which the groups organise their work, events, activities, may provide a peek inside how communities make decisions that connect everyone in a democratic fashion. It involves duration, sequence, synchronization and interdependence. These involve developing friendships and relationships, the nurturing of these relationships, and the temporalities of these relationships. The study explores what it is about the different organisations that make

volunteering/engaging with them possible. It explores how they facilitate this, and what barriers within the organisation make it difficult. It identifies and discusses how the organisations facilitate volunteering while they are perhaps asking ‘Do you have time for this?’

Chapter Nine asks ‘*Have we got time for this?*’ and explores negotiations with others. Having approached the organisation and perhaps filled out application forms, a prospective volunteer may have to take this to her family, friends or workmates, who might say, ‘well it’s not just about you, it’s also going to impact on us’. This chapter then examines the idea that to make volunteering possible, an individual often has to have support around them – so volunteering is not simply an idea of ‘Can I do this?’ but ‘Do we have time for this?’ The chapter examines these negotiations within families, friends and workforces that allow an individual to volunteer, and discusses the routines, rhythms and the messiness of time that needs to be negotiated within the day-to-day practices of the volunteer.

Chapter Ten: ‘*Do I have time for this? Negotiations with self*’ builds on previous chapters that identify how women can negotiate with organisations about when and how they participate, and how that through negotiation, volunteering can be fitted in around family, friends and domestic and work routines. However, volunteers still have to negotiate with themselves, and so this chapter discusses negotiations of the self around identity and self-doubt – moving onto issues of what people’s bodies allow.

Moving on, chapter eleven: ‘*Non-human negotiation*’ explores the underpinnings of structural time and how modern technologies aid and constrain agency and access to civic engagement. It explores how technology is facilitative but also constraining, while also discussing infrastructures and the rhythms and pace of modern life.

Overall the thesis locates the analysis of this material in the broader debates about the ways in which time figures in people’s community involvement, and how time is ‘found’,

'made' and 'negotiated'. The time 'spent' by a person involved in community activities is the outcome of extensive and on-going negotiations between that person and the collectivities of which she is a part, and following Elias, the argument is developed that these negotiations have to strike a workable balance between the 'I' and the 'We' elements of her life.

8. Have you got time for this? negotiations within organisations

I am orange
A time of change
Energising and stirring me into action
Inspired by the group discussions
Activities and events
Empowering women
An accepting, equitable environment
Feeling motivated
I return home to research topics
Becoming more informed politically
And hoping
For greater empowerment for women
That we can become more visible
Respected
Equals in society
Society that I hope will soon be
An independent Scotland
I am Women for Independence
MD. WFI 2016

As was noted already, the surprising thing about volunteering is how much of it happens, and in this chapter we can start to explore what makes this outcome possible. It is not simply about finding/having time, it's also about having time to fit into an organisation and the ways in which they work, including their timetables. In this chapter I will be looking at how women relate to organisations with which they have a volunteering relationship and I'll be looking, first of all, at the challenges and obstacles to finding time to volunteer that there are, but also at the ways that these can be negotiated, and can be facilitated by the ways in which the organisation works.

When discussing change within communities and volunteering, it would be remiss not to look at the changes occurring within the organisations themselves; the changes that have taken and are taking place, the underpinnings of these changes and the effects of these changes – on both society in general and on members of the organisations. The three groups in the study, while all situated locally, act as communities of interest to the members attached to them. They highlight ways in which women have found alternative modes of campaigning, volunteering and community building: shifting trajectories to suit their goals within change social landscapes and within the changing situations of the members. In other communities or organisations, projects will be planned out over an extended period of time, and within the process of development, things may shift and change, but the basic structure of the plan will remain. The pantomime is similar in that the script of the story is created within a process of the rehearsal space with members adding their ideas of how the project develops.

On first contemplating volunteering with any organisation or group project, one of the concerns that is likely to spring to mind is ‘when do they meet, how often, and for how long?’ The three groups in this study have volunteers and members who attend across a temporal spectrum. Rape Crisis volunteers spend six months of training (mentioned previously in chapter 5), followed by at least three hours of volunteering per week. The women from Rape Crisis involved in this study were helpline shift workers, however some also did drop-in duties, and sessional (paid) work. The women for independence activists meet once monthly, while also engaging in various projects throughout the year. Outwith their monthly meetings, they keep in touch via their closed (private) social media group: discussing up-to-date political concerns, wider events of interest, and their various on-going projects. One particular project was their Christmas children’s shop – which was open every day throughout the month of December. This was discussed in some detail in chapter 5. The final group ‘Tangled Rose’ meet at least once weekly to line-dance, however, the members of the pantomime project also meet twice weekly

from September through to December to write, rehearse, and then perform their seasonal pantomime.

In addition to their more visible forms of ‘volunteering’, it should be highlighted that many of the women in all groups spend countless additional ‘below the radar’ hours organising and helping out with their organisations: keeping up-to-date via social media; writing scripts; shopping for and making costumes; practising lines; emailing and administrative tasks; organising events and fundraising – the list is not exhaustive.

8.1 Diversity and change among volunteers

The three groups of women in this study have been chosen, not simply for the different ways in which they choose to engage in voluntary activities, or the varying temporalities of their organisations, but additionally because of the muddy and somewhat contradictory understandings around women’s time, women’s organising, and also women’s volunteering – given that not everyone who does voluntary work thinks of themselves as volunteers. The three groups here help to challenge what is often understood and accepted as ‘volunteering’ – and what this term means to those in more marginalised communities, or for individuals with restricted access to more formal forms of volunteering. Volunteering often ‘implies unpaid services within the formal structure of a non-profit organisation’ (Benenson and Stagg, 2016, p.132). Volunteers from low-income populations are more likely to volunteer informally than those who are better off financially (Benenson and Stagg, 2016). The three groups draw to light the potential significance of formal and informal ‘volunteering’ for women to improve their own lives and well-being, and support their communities by challenging the limiting aspects of what often counts as volunteering.

Some of the volunteers at Rape Crisis felt that the title ‘volunteer’ trivialised the intense training they had gone through, or how skilled they were – and simply called themselves

‘Rape Crisis Support Workers’. The WFI members, despite carrying out lots of ‘voluntary’ services in their community, did not call themselves volunteers either, and wanted to be known as political ‘activists’. The dance group, when asked about their ‘volunteering’ replied ‘We’re no volunteers hen – we’re just having a laugh’. They *were* having a laugh – and while doing so, they remind us of the importance of finding pleasure and enjoyment within our lives and within our communities – and that volunteering is not only about benefitting other people.

The three groups work very differently in relation to the organising of volunteer time – but also in that some of the groups may have visions for the future, whereas others are simply about community enjoyment or ‘making people happy’ (Gracie (TR) Interview, November 2015). Over time, groups and organisations undoubtedly shift and change (including changes in their membership), and ‘yet somehow retain a certain set of identities’ (Gilchrist, 2012, p.1). People join, negotiate roles and rules. They fall out with each other, leave, develop new skills, and create new sets of relationships while generally responding to opportunities and demands as they emerge – or are imposed from the outside world of politics and economics (ibid). Rape Crisis for example can be seen as campaigning for change within societies around sexual violence against women, while offering support to women on a day-to-day basis. Both the dance group and Rape Crisis have been active in their communities for a lengthy period of time (25 years and 40 years respectively), and have over this period of time made changes to the ways in which they organise and function in accordance with societal changes – and with the changes in the lives of the women who engage with them. Similarly, Women for Independence, emerging as a result of political upheaval in 2012, have had to alter the trajectory of their movement following the 2014 defeat of their national campaign to gain independence for Scotland. Temporally, the three organisations were seen to experience time in the form of deadlines, and dates by which funding applications, and projects need to be completed. Sometimes deadlines were set externally, leaving little scope for the

organisation to proceed at a pace that feels right to them, or their members. The other more autonomous groups appeared to be able to set their own pace – but even within this there were tensions around who sets the pace and how members fit with the pace and rhythms of the group.

8.2 Challenging sisterhood

I wanted to look at these three groups as women-only spaces for all of the reasons mentioned above, but I also wanted to explore the philosophy that is often promoted within women-only groups: an idea that women organise differently, and that women-only groups act as safe spaces: spaces that nurture, and that evolve naturally if only the layers of bureaucracy are removed (Brown, 1992). While some women's groups continue to offer principles and values of sisterhood and solidarity, the ideal isn't always the reality, and while these ideas continue to have a lot of power within some of the groups in this study, not everyone lives by the same standards, principles or life experiences. Many feminist scholars have cautioned against a philosophy of sisterhood and solidarity as being automatically characterised as nurturing and supportive (Bastian, 2006; Lyshaug, 2006; Simmonds, 1997). A similar frame of thinking has often been given to women's organisations whereby a common 'need' is considered enough to bring women together, and through trial and error, work harmoniously to 'evolve order out of a situation' (Brown, 1992, p.7). This is an issue that we may not have progressed past, and while some scholars may have sought to move past 'romantic ideals' of sisterhood by drawing attention to the ways in which the power differences within women's groups were being unrecognised (Shaw, 1993), it appears to have a continued influence within two of the groups in this study.

Both Rape Crisis management and Women for Independence (at National Level) were noted during field work and interviews to use the term '*sisters*' when addressing their

members. The RC management and more established members of staff who had been at the centre from 'collective' days – a term used by the management to describe the early set-up of the organisation, were those who predominantly used the term 'sister'. This form of addressing staff and volunteers only occurred however when addressing a whole group at meetings, or group emails, while using first names within day-to-day interactions. WFI similarly used the term 'sister' at national conference events when addressing whole rooms. In a similar vein to Simmonds' questions around feminism and friendship I wondered whether the use of 'sister' over 'friends', or even 'colleagues' gave their gatherings a more activist or solidarity context: as a 'central ideology for feminism' (1997, p.21). Rape Crisis staff and volunteers may consider each other as 'friends' within the centre, as might the WFI groups – especially within the smaller local branches. However, the relationships that exist within the groups did not appear to be of particular close friendship among everyone. The dance group appeared to be more in the traditional style of women's gatherings. Friendship and also kinship was visible among the members – with members being willing to help each other out when in personal need in quite informal ways. This group did not claim to identify with any notions of feminism or sisterhood – or even traditional notions of solidarity.

While RC appear to be 'managing' the term 'sisterhood' well (they have had forty years of working within an all-women organisation) I got the feeling that the term had hung around from the days of the collective, rather than its use as a continuing principle of democracy and equality that the centre was positioned on. One member of staff reported that at present, fewer RC volunteers and staff have 'deep-rooted feminist politics at their core'.

The minority are those who have very strong feminist beliefs and deep-rooted politics that were so relevant in the early times
(Rose_Interview_16.2.2016)

There are often expectations within sisterhoods, or those groups that base their female friendships on this term, that the qualities aligned with the term are those of altruism, vulnerability and self-sacrifice (Hochschild, 1978) without thinking too deeply about how these affect our friendships, and expectations of ourselves and others in such friendships (Simmonds, 1997, p.23) or groups.

During an interview, Millie (one of the helpline volunteers) spoke of often feeling a sense of alienation when being part of women's groups. She identified as bisexual, and often felt that her sexual identity at times left her a little alienated within groups of heterosexual women.

'I'm 'Bi' (sexual) and I've had a lot of past issues being in communities of women, and so it is really nice to be about and around women and not feel all weird about it, and have this all female space to be a part of and to have that be like a cool thing. I think within RC I feel like a little bit more experienced so that is quite nice, I feel like I'm allowed to have an opinion if you know what I mean. I also think I am beginning to realise that I come from a different generation of feminists and I quite like that because I think it's so important within social justice movements to give links to communities, so that you have that link across generations because I can sit down and chat to someone who is from my parents' generation and within five minutes of talking to them I can learn lessons that they have taken thirty years to learn.'

(Millie_Interview_4.9.2015)

This account above gave a very positive report of how all-women groups and organisations *can* work well, however it has taken RC many years to reach this point – and while they still base themselves as a feminist organisation, they have gradually shifted from the collective ideology to a more hierarchical business type model. One of

the reasons, in addition to funding obligations, that RC decided to progress from a collective model, was because of the internal tensions within the earlier collective model. Explaining their progression from a 'flat' collective to a 'vertical' managerial run organisation, one RC members told me;

'While we are now organised on a 'hierarchical' model, with a managerial setting and a board of directors, don't believe for a minute that there weren't hierarchies within the collective. There absolutely were' (Rose_Interview_16.2.2016)

From the discussions with management at RC, and who have been with the centre since it identified as a collective, and conversations with the WFI members, it would appear that newly-emerging all-women groups may find difficulty negotiating which relationships are valued, especially when women are coming together for a particular cause or ideology, but from many different perspectives. On a historical level, feminism and women's organising have been guilty of overlooking, or failing to recognise, the differing priorities that women have, and/or recognising differences within 'solidarity and alliance'.

At an early stage of my fieldwork spent with the local WFI group, a WFI national conference was being held and I went along to observe the event. A local town hall had been booked for the event and the large main hall had been laid out with tables and chairs in as 'round café style' arrangement that allows for group conversations. The event covered a variety of issues around the benefits of an independent Scotland, and how current politics negatively impact on women, however the final discussion for the day was centred on sex work and the laws around prostitution. The aim was to provide a space for discussion within recent attempts to change legislation in the Scottish Parliament. An entry was made to the WFI website prior to the event which stated

‘The aim is to have a respectful conversation, accepting that others have strongly and genuinely held views which might be different from our own, and to assess if we can find common ground that people can coalesce around.’ (WFI_2015a).

An international academic feminist speaker had been invited to give a talk on the benefits of the Swedish legal system. The guidelines were that everyone listen to what the speakers had to say, and then attendees would move to tables which had pre-set questions allocated to them. Everyone at the table would be encouraged to comment on the question.

‘Everyone was instructed to move to a table and discuss the statement/question at the table within the group. Everyone was to contribute wherever possible.... I felt more than a little uncomfortable with the insistence that everyone should have something to say on such a controversial and sensitive topic’ (Fieldnotes_4.10.2015)

During the presentation, a young woman in the audience stood up. She was visibly upset, and hesitantly put her hand up in the air as she rose to her feet. The young woman began to tell the room (of women) that she was a sex worker and that she disagreed with what the speaker had to say.

The organisers thanked her for standing up, but politely asked her to sit back down and informed her that she would be given opportunity to speak after the presentation and group discussions. The woman began to cry, then demanded that she be heard. A voice from the right hand side of the hall quietly, but firmly said “Let her speak”.

‘It was quite distressing to hear the young woman shushed. It must have taken a great deal of courage to stand up and disclose her

occupation to a room full of women – especially to those who had been discussing sex workers as if they were without voice or autonomy. Women in the room called out to the presenter and organisers, insisting that they wanted to hear what the woman had to say. At my own table, women were mumbling to each other about how WFI was supposed to be a space where women's voices could be heard. (Fieldnotes_4.10.2015)

The presenters looked to each other for guidance. Women around the room at their tables shifted uncomfortably, and more and more voices asked that the woman be allowed to speak. The young woman was given a microphone and the opportunity to speak – however, she was so distressed by this point that she found difficulty speaking without breaking down in tears. Eventually, another woman walked across the hall, and comforted her. The presentations and table discussions continued – albeit with some tension within the hall.

I raised the subject a few weeks later at one of the local group meetings, asking for thoughts on what had taken place that afternoon. While some members of the local group wanted to discuss their discomfort of 'being forced to discuss something I know little about' and a discomfort at hearing the woman shushed, other members did not want to discuss the issue at all, and felt that the subject didn't have any impact on their local community, or the experiences of local people in the context of austerity. It was clearly an issue that caused difficulty among the group, with some wishing to discuss how it had been dealt with, and the problems concerning silencing other women (at national level), and those who felt they had more important issues to tackle within their local branch. The subject was later brought up for discussion on the group social media page (a closed private group page), but the subject was closed down by one of the administrators for fear it would cause too many tensions within the group. The decision to close the discussion down, whether right or wrong, was agreed upon, and members

appeared to move on from this quite quickly. However, I did have further (brief) conversations with members about the subject at later dates. While these members felt that it should have been discussed further, they did appreciate that sometimes it is best to move on from things even if one doesn't agree, and that the welfare of group cohesion was more important than their own personal views on the subject. This type of self-sacrifice, of putting the group first, or accepting that there is a 'time to speak and a time to be silent', was evident within all of the groups in the study over the course of the fieldwork. Having the opportunity to have their say reinforced volunteers' preparedness to commit time to the organization of which they felt a part.

8.3. Am I everyone? (belonging to a group)

There is a paradox within modern society in which democratic societies support the individual: human rights, free speech, free market – however that 'thing' that societal solidarity is supposed to support (the individual) is the very factor that can cause solidarity within societies to fail. Within our current western societies, the I-identity is often seen as more important than our We-identity – that which we have in common with one another – the former outweighs the latter. It's a bit of a paradox really as we would all agree that the rights of the individual are important in our understandings of a democratic society – and that it is important that we all have our beliefs and identities recognised – however, we are also encouraged to work together, to care for and support each other in our communities to act as one whole. Elias (2001) argues that societies and communities are not simply a gathering of individuals coming together to form a group, but instead societies *are* the relationships between these individuals that form what we know as society.

The volunteers at Rape Crisis were found to help each other out with shift changes if needed. The shift schedule was organised in a way that suited everyone in a long-term

period, however things happen in life and sudden changes often need to take place. There was a general feeling of 'I'll scratch your back if you scratch mine. I'll do yours next week if you've got a date night or whatever' (Millie_interview 4.9.15), and there was a feeling of collective negotiation, working with each other and 'taking one for the team'. The volunteers at RC appeared generally happy to help each other out if they could with regard to shift cover. However, paradoxically, they were not so forthcoming at attending centre meetings, which might consequently help build stronger relationships from being part of those meetings.

'I don't go to the centre meetings. I haven't got time. I just want to come in and do my shift and go home' (Jessica_Informal conversation)

It would appear that for many of the volunteers, their affiliation to the centre was focused on support for the service users, and not the wider organisation. For many they just didn't see their role in that sense very clearly at all. Nevertheless, a good number of the volunteers did attend the 'Reclaim the Night' march (5.2.1.2), organised by the centre – and helped out in the organisation of the march in addition to showing up on the night to march, carry banners and steward the event.

Belonging, often defined as 'a sense of ease a person can have with themselves and their surroundings' (May, 2016, p.3), is normally developed over time. It can, however, also be felt almost immediately in a group setting – although it is often more noticeable to feel a sense of 'not belonging' (May, 2016b): a jarring feeling, sitting uncomfortably in a setting, when one thinks 'I just don't belong here'.

One of the Rape Crisis volunteers spoke of feeling a sense of belonging as soon as she officially finished her training.

'Well as soon as I finished doing my training... I just felt different. I just felt like, part of something. I was part of this women's organisation and together we were strong' (Millie_Interview, 2.9.15)

Another volunteer, Alison, also spoke of feeling a sense of belonging to something bigger by being a volunteer at Rape Crisis.

'I'm part of the sisterhood – don't mess with me'

The members of the WFI spoke of being part of something local and national, and there was a collective identity and belonging to a sense of nationhood and a women's movement that had a history and a future moving within the present.

I am orange
The sun going down
Sinking below the horizon
Slipping behind the sleeping warrior on Arran
Fingers clinging to that mountain
I enjoy the company of these women
Like minded. Engaged
All supportive women
I am *with* women – leading.
Trying to make the world
A better place
(excerpt from poem by CP, 2016)

The idea of belonging is central to our understanding of how people give meaning to their lives. Our sense of identity is founded on social interactions that show our belonging

to particular communities through shared beliefs, values, or practices, or the ways in which we invest time in something together.

'I feel like you are investing something, so it's like if you're investing time in something and it's a long-term project, you have that sense of relationship, you have that sense of belonging as part of that relationship' (Millie_Interview_ 2.9.15)

We are, in essence, social beings, and one of the ways in which we sense this social dimension of the self, and how it becomes apparent, is through a sense of connectedness or belonging to places and people – and groups (May, 2013, 2016a). The connectedness we have with others helps us feel 'at home', and is a means through which people can feel a sense of inclusion (Yuval-Davis, 2011). Even with the support of friends and group members, the sense of belonging is not guaranteed, and highlights the temporal aspect of belonging.

During the run up to the Scottish Elections in 2015, Kara and Rhona (WFI) had organised a 'family-friendly' political hustings at their local toddlers' group as a means to allow women from the toddler group the opportunity to access their local MP's– in a 'non-shouty' environment' (Kara). Both women were members of the toddler group and thought this would provide an inclusive environment that other members would appreciate. However, on the day of the event, a substantial number of the mothers did not attend, choosing instead to stay away, and later explaining that they weren't really interested in 'those sort of things'. Despite feeling supported by their own WFI group, Kara and Rhona felt rejected by the wider community group of women that they felt they had common bonds with, and which they felt had developed over their time being involved with the toddler-group. However, reflecting on this experience brought to light some other examples of disconnection between the two women and the 'toddler group'

that they had previously overlooked – and highlights the necessity of belonging to be felt equally by both parties. The WFI policy of not having to attend every meeting while still being a valued member of the organisation (often kept in touch via email and social media) also provides an interesting view of the temporal aspect of belonging that sits 'out of time' (May, 2016a, p11). Somewhat similar to friends who don't see each other for some time, but can pick up from when they last met, WFI groups allow members a similar sense of belonging across time.

While the pantomime has social benefits to the wider community, and to the causes they fundraise for, another motivation for participating is the fun that the members have. There are stressful moments involved, especially as the performance date draws closer, nevertheless, there were a great many moments of laughter and enjoyment, and examples of thoughtfulness.

I was the fairy godmother and Gracie had got me a wedding dress. I had never had a wedding dress, well, not a proper one, and I always wanted to be a princess, and oh, the tears were running. They said 'It's only for the panto, you're not getting married'. It fitted me and I looked so beautiful (Laughs). I loved it, and I loved that we just got on so brilliantly. (Lilith_Interview_8.2.2016)

The script is written to entertain and amuse the audience, and the cast members are the first to experience this themselves. I was able to record and photograph one of the sketches being rehearsed. The group asked me to do so, in order that they see what the audience sees, and tighten the routine through watching the recorded rehearsal. It was a very funny routine, and all the members of the group were thrilled by how funny it was.

'Oh that's brilliant – funniest sketch we've done yet. I can't wait to do this on the night. Once we've got all our props, it will be even funnier'
(Bella: informal conversation)

There was a great deal of pride attached to how amused the audience would be. It was important to all the members. The fundraising, the cause, were secondary to the entertainment aspect of the whole event – and this was extended to each other in the group too. The enjoyment factor wasn't just for those in the audience, it was important that the members enjoyed themselves too – especially to Gracie. As the weeks went by and tensions grew, she would remind me often of the importance of it being fun. There were moments when I suspected that her actions were the cause of some tensions within the group as she found it difficult to keep her emotions 'in check' when rehearsals didn't go well, and the performance date was growing closer. Exercising self-restraint was witnessed in this group during periods of tension. It is important in the reinforcement of 'specific emotional bonds' that allow members 'to stand together' and maintain the connected nature of the group (Elias and Scotson, 1994, pp.154-5). The collective understanding that 'it was for fun' both gave space for getting things wrong during rehearsals, but was also constraining in the aspect of being 'forced' to overlook any unpleasant behaviour by some members during moments of 'weakness', and the self-restraint often required by the others who were on the receiving end, or having to witness this.

'Ah [I] just ignore it. It's no' worth getting upset about – she disnae mean it' (Alisha (TR)_Informal conversation_Nov 2015)

Alison, a RC volunteer, was comparing the centre to her place of employment and the difference she observed between the women who worked in each place, and how differently she found herself relating to each group of women.

'I've been a feminist from a child (laughs), and I've always seen the wrongs, but I never felt I ever had anybody that I could share some of my thoughts with. Other women that I knew just did not seem to have the same opinions, and when I joined (RC), I thought – you know, it's just lovely to have.... You see my work place, at the [names place of employment], they talk about food "Oh I made a lovely macaroni cheese last night, do you know that cheese you get in Asda.." That stuff bores me rigid! They're not all like that, but those are the loudest people and they drag everyone into that same boring conversation' (Alison (RC)_Interview 19.9.15)

The ladies of the dance group appeared to focus (some part of) their sense of belonging to the area from which most of them originated. Pantomime scripts were written to exaggerate their local accent – and their sense of belonging was related to both place and social class. The group in the pantomime referred to one member of the group as 'Lady Elyse' (pseudonym) – because she lived in a very large house and spoke with a slightly different accent from the others. This local identity was important to many of the group and its history as a working-class area. Comments and friendly jibes were often made at Elyse's expense – asking her how many rooms her '*castle*' had – and while Elyse appeared to fit in relatively well with the group, there was a little bit of a sense of 'otherness' to her membership. There were hidden conditions to her being a member, and a feeling that her membership within the group might just not be on quite the same terms as the others. A few of the wider group, despite being less affluent than Elyse, certainly had a more developed sense of ownership or, as Elias might suggest, that they

felt more established in their belonging to the group (and place) (Elias and Scotson, 1994). Despite living in the area for a good many years, Elyse, and Sophia (who also spoke with a non-local accent) were, in a sense, still newcomers or *outsiders* as far as the more 'established' local members of the group were concerned: Class, money, and style of clothing played as much a part in this as accents did. Elyse and Sophia enjoyed visiting the theatre and travelling, and this 'difference' was often visible during rehearsal times.

Elyse is concerned about her character *falling* on stage. Her character is required to drop to the floor, feigning illness, and she is afraid she might injure herself. While the other members discuss with her how they might overcome this, their sympathy, (from facial expressions and body language), appears rather insincere. Shushed comments are made later about her being 'too good' to fall down (fieldnotes_2.11.2015).

Over time, particular sets of hierarchies appear in the group. One of the script writers 'fluffed' up her lines during one of the rehearsals, and when this was pointed out to her, she stated that the lines she had used (in error) sounded better than the original – and that was the reason she remembered them that way. Some of the more confident members of the group pointed out, in a half-joking manner, that others were not allowed the same privilege without discussion or agreement from the group. There were clear hierarchies within the other groups of volunteers also, and these were often situated around available time and skills (and confidence) – and I will pick up on this in the following section on facilitating time.

The Rape Crisis volunteer who spoke (earlier) of feeling an immediate sense of belonging on finishing her training, later recalled a moment when she realised she felt a more developed sense of belonging to the centre.

'I had been volunteering here for a few months after my training, and you know how there are always chocolate biscuits here? Well, I asked if I could have a chocolate biscuit. A staff member answered "Of course, they're for everyone" I thought to myself (with a smile) "Am I everyone?" That was the moment I think when I really felt an equal sense of place here. I was everyone, and everyone was me' (Millie (RC)_ Interview_ 2.9.15)

As the young woman described this experience to me, I thought about the process and temporality of belonging, and that, in time, she herself may be the one saying to another new volunteer 'Of course, they're for everyone'. However, her two different accounts of feeling a sense of belonging (on completing training, and the biscuits) show how belonging can shift and change according to our temporal selves, how it evolves from developing bonds with others within groups but how it is also affected by changing circumstances (May, 2016a).

The informal structure of two of the groups (WFI and TR), and the ability for some members to be as involved as fitted their lifestyle, while still being part of the groups, allowed for feelings of belonging between these members despite restricted disposable time. The dance group/panto cast have members who only helped with the lighting, or working the curtain on performance night. One member acted as an audience 'plant' during performances: there to prompt the audience on moments of "It's behind you". Unsure of what they might bring to the group in terms of expertise or skills, these members had vocalised not wishing to be full-cast members. They still wanted to 'help out' in some way, and the group found activities that suited their time and levels of confidence. Participation in civic engagement such as this not only allows members of communities to feel part of what is going on, but also forces us to think about civic

engagement or volunteering in less formal ways – and challenges what we think being active members of our communities might entail.

As I spoke with the women from the three groups, and retraced my own experiences of fitting in, I became aware of how often food (and objects) were involved. Training at Rape Crisis every second Sunday positions itself around a table of food, where everyone passes food, chats and shares stories while eating. It is an opportunity for the new volunteers to get to know one another while they also have opportunity to informally chat with the trainers. The ladies from Tangled Rose meet, each Sunday afternoon, and Thursday evening during the months of September to December for rehearsal. Each Sunday, Margaret arrived with flasks of hot water, tea, coffee and home baking. When I enquired as to why she brought the hot drinks and baking – and half expecting to be told something along the lines of reciprocity, she replied;

‘I’m ay (always) frozen in that hall. I like a cup of tea and we’re there for hours on a Sunday. I bring the cakes cos I know the weans are there, and it keeps them a bit quieter’ (Informal conversation_Nov 2015)

While Margaret is suggesting that she is bringing the hot drinks for her own benefit, by bringing extra cups and tea bags for everyone else, she is sharing who she is: what makes her feel good and bad. Bringing tea cups (and not disposable cups) and baking from home, she is sharing not only ‘food’, but her time and the care that she has put into preparing the food. She is bringing her home to the others so that they feel as comfortable as she hopes to be while drinking the warm tea. She knows that she will have extra chores to do when she returns home with the used tea cups, but still she brings them, rather than provide disposable cups for the others to drink from. By giving herself these extra chores, for the good of the group, we can see Elias’s We-I balance

shift toward the we in respect of Margaret's act. She is sharing her own belongings with the others, so that they might share in that belonging, so that they too feel comfortable in the rehearsal space. The term 'belonging' has connotations of ownership – in that something 'belongs to me' (Block, 2009, p.xiii). Margaret, in a sense, is helping to build and nurture the group, take ownership of it, and promote a sense of ownership and belonging among her fellow dance group members and perhaps encourage a wider and deeper sense of emotional responsibility for one another. However, belonging is not one-sided, and if others had rejected Margaret's offer of cups of tea "No, we don't want your tea", then there might be a problem. We might even find in occasions such as this - as a reciprocal act of kindness, and/or as a way to say 'You're one of us', the women accepting the tea although not really wanting it. The expression 'people like us' is commonly reported in community studies as a way of conveying what is understood by 'community' (Crow 2018).

In addition to the welcoming space provided by RC and their constant supply of chocolate biscuits, other groups facilitate volunteering by allowing family members to accompany members (children and grandchildren participate in the pantomime and WFI events often involved children). Others are facilitated by the locality of the groups and the fact that they are focused on local community well-being. For others, the spaces allow for learning and skill sharing as much as anything else.

It may be supposed that volunteers give up their time during periods in their lives when things are relatively good, and they have time and availability to commit to an organisation. However, some people volunteer when times are bad: when they are unemployed, or suffering from mental health issues and use volunteering as a way to avoid isolation or get back into paid work. In addition to this, volunteers have a desire to work alongside others, and to recognise that some other people (in their communities) are not in such a good place, and know that further down the line (in the future) things might be the other way about.

8.4 Facilitating time

Working together in groups isn't simply just about compromising on issues at hand, or what, how and why projects should be tackled. Arrangement of time within groups and organisations, while often difficult to agree on, is something that is not always discussed explicitly in sufficient detail. Expectations of attendance by members at requested and required times do not exist in a vacuum. Time may be perceived as a singly all-encompassing flow, however, when working together *with* others, time may be experienced as a negotiation with multiple and conflicting expectations and demands. Time then becomes something more than a flow of past/present/future: it becomes intertwined with bureaucratic methods, accountabilities, habits, systems or organisations and the shaping of social relations. Synchronising time with others, and with other demands on our time, exists through shared understandings of time within a society or community that makes visible concepts of best/wrong times for events and activities (Adam, 1990, 1995; Elias, 1992): There is a standard or way of measuring time that people use as a way of regulating their behaviour in relation to each other – and community coherence would hardly work if we were all going about making up our own time. In that sense, we are reminded that one does not invent the concept of time on one's own – and that we are 'inseparable from the social institution of time from childhood as one grows up in a society in which this concept – and its institutions – exist' (Elias, 1992, p.11). In the most part, groups are not inclined to organise meetings at midnight for the simple fact that, within our western society, these are times when most people (although not all) are sleeping. Those working during the hours when most are asleep are often offered 'unsocial hours' allowance in their employment package – highlighting that these working hours sit outside that of the norm of society. These societal patterns of waking and sleeping are a basic indicator of how we live time together in societies and communities. Similarly, volunteers who have paid employment during the hours of 9-5 are hardly to be expected to volunteer regularly during those

hours – unless prior arrangements have been made with their employers. Thus, the idea of best/wrong times, and the ability to synchronise within groups and communities, shifts and fluctuates as social environments change. Flexi-time, for example, a scheme where an organisation gives its employees the opportunity of flexible working hours, is utilised within many organisations. Hence, time might therefore be described as a means of orientation created by people and the landscape in which they dwell – however, as noted above, institutions and social developments also play a role in how time is communicated to us (Elias, 1992).

Rape Crisis for example require that volunteers are punctual, although ‘punctual’ in modern society often refers to the beginning of meetings/shifts, and not the end (Shaw, 1994), and to attend their shifts regularly – not merely because they enjoy the idea of punctuality or rules, but because the services they provide demand it. Non-attendance by volunteers for a shift would leave service users without support – which could, if this happened often enough, result in the centre losing vital funding, and credibility with service users and other stakeholders.

During my initial contact with the centre – a period of time following my own training with the organisation – the approved method for organising shift rotas for volunteer help-line staff was via an online ‘sign-up’ method. A few weeks prior to the dates required for cover, an email would be sent out to all volunteers inviting them to sign up to cover the dates and times available; a first come, first served arrangement for choosing the best time suitable to each individual volunteer. When I arrived to conduct my fieldwork, however, this method for organising the rota had changed, and a new method was in place. These changes were necessary to co-ordinate with a new centre project, and to sit alongside the ways in which volunteer hours were arranged within the national centre. An allocated paid member of staff – a ‘volunteer rota co-ordinator’ (VRC), assigned times and dates to volunteers. The helpline shifts were allocated,

according to the availability of the volunteer – e.g. ‘Mary’ would cover Tuesdays from 5.30 -7.30pm each week – either long-term, or for the next two weeks.

To allow the VRC to organise these times, she would have previously gathered information of ‘best’ times for volunteers – or perhaps more importantly, times that were unsuitable for the volunteer to cover shifts (wrong times). From the gathered data, the VRC created a rota for all available volunteers (Figure 2). If these particular dates were not suitable at any (late) stage, volunteers were themselves responsible for finding cover for the slotted time.

W/C 31/8/15	Info	31 Mon	1 Tues	2 Wed	3 Thurs	4 Frid	5 Sat	6 Sun
Any weekday					E			
T (L) 1p/w								
every 2nd Monday (L)				E				
Sun 1 p/m Tues(E)			E					
One W(E) 2p/m								
Sun								
Shift worker								
Shift worker (1p/f)								
M(L) W(L) Th(L) Fri/Sat/Sun	E					E		
Sun alternate No Wed/Thurs								E
W(L) (1p/f)								
Fri Sat Sun								
Mon-Th (L)					L			
M (L)		L						
T (L)			L					
Sat/Sun							E	
M(E) only								
Office cover		Wendy	Laura	Debbie	Paul			

E = Early shift 11am-2pm
L = Late shift 5.30-7.30pm

Figure 2: Example of a RC rota

Staff explained that the previous arrangement had been found to be problematic, with insufficient volunteers signing up to cover shifts, leaving paid staff having to step in – or with no other options available, the closure of the helpline for that particular shift.

‘..people were to sign up for a shift and people weren’t doing it, so what we’ve developed is the same way the Rape Crisis Scotland do it so this was an attempt to, well Rape Crisis Scotland do it this way, then when [project³] [was set up]...we tried this and this seemed to work better’. (Carol-Ann_Interview_23.7.15)

I was curious to know how volunteers felt about this change from person-centred ‘self-choice’ to managerial directed cover. The organisational administration of the centre was premised on a managerial model, however the everyday running of the centre was, to a significant degree, non-hierarchical in nature: everyone answered the door, everyone made the tea, everyone generally helped out (although paid staff did have specified roles within the organisation) and final day-to-day decisions were made by the centre manager. While paid staff and management maintained that everyone was valued equally, this new rota arrangement appeared to remove a certain degree of power from the volunteers; the control balance had shifted from volunteer to organisation.

My initial concerns were that volunteers would feel uncomfortable with this new method of shift-time allocation. Volunteering is after all, an expression of an individual's freedom to choose, and so, in a sense, a volunteer may be thinking, ‘I’m giving up my time but now I’m being told when I’m doing it, and now I have to schedule my time to fit in with the organisation’ – which again raises concerns about time sovereignty – and an individual’s ability to choose how one allocates one’s own time (Roberts, 2002; Wajcman, 2016). I raised the subject during interviews, asking volunteers how they felt about this change and if they found it to be any kind of barrier to their ability to volunteer.

³ I have removed the title of the project for reasons of confidentiality.

'I think I prefer it this way. I could never decide which time was best, or I'd be late logging on and would miss the best time suitable for me. This way, I know what my shifts are and I can prepare things in advance – I can organise my life around my shifts at RC' (Emilia_Interview, 16.7.15)

This 'new' method acts more in terms of future needs – which Elias describes as requiring more 'self-restraint' (1992) or 'self-sacrifice' - a quality often expected of women (Simmonds, 1997, p.23), and which often puts additional demands on women to act in the interest of others (Hochschild, 1978, 1983). Often the underpinnings of community relationships are gendered. The ways in which the centre and volunteers accepted the need to forward plan their time to correspond with each other highlight the increasing interdependencies (between volunteers, their workplace and families), and the ways in which accurate timing of all relationships becomes progressively more demanding as the network becomes more complex (Wajcman, 2016). This is especially evident in RC. It is a growing organisation, and within the time I attended for fieldwork, was providing an increasing number support mechanisms.

A few of the volunteers are also employed by the RC centre as paid sessional workers (to cover holidays, illness etc.). While this is a facilitating element to being a volunteer, in that it allows occasional paid work for volunteers, it is also problematic for the centre when these times clash, and can impact on the emotional well-being of volunteers if they feel they are letting one group of service users down for another group, especially where money is concerned. Difficulties can occur when deciding which time is more important: one's time as a volunteer, or one's time as a paid employee, something that volunteers often have to deal with when negotiating time spent in voluntary activities. However, it

would appear in this sense that the centre too, prioritise the needs of their volunteers' economic welfare.

'We have, and have had in the past quite a few volunteers who are also doing sessional work [in the centre], so, the work is almost given out in the same way as the volunteers, but if they've already got a shift as a volunteer and then get a shift as a sessional worker, then we end up with a situation where they've got to take the shift work and we're let down for the helpline which is obviously frustrating, but at the same time, this is somebody's livelihood, they're depending on shifts' (Carol-Anne_Interview_23.7.15)

Similar occurrences can happen for those volunteers who work zero-hours contracts outside of the centre as their main source of income.

'They might be on zero-hours contracts and if they get offered a shift (at work) at the last minute and knock it back, then they might not get offered another shift again. They might have families (they might not, whatever) but they are dependent on that money and it's very easy for us that have salary to sit back and go 'oh they're letting us down on the helpline' (Carol-Anne_Interview_23.7.15)

General understandings within modern western society is that people will be punctual. However, these notions of punctuality overlook the variations of many individual lives and the ways in which we all live in time. There is also a certain moralistic and rigid understanding about how we view other people's time keeping – to the extent where governments lay heavy penalties on benefit claimants if they are even slightly late for an appointment, whether or not it is their fault.

Even within the most informal of activities, individuals are expected to be on time, and are often made to feel guilty or lacking in moral virtue if they keep others waiting too long. Women for Independence have a collective philosophy that no member ever apologise for being late or unable to attend meetings. Their collective understanding is that women's time is often restricted, and that when a crisis occurs in the home, it is often women's time that is sacrificed. However, not all groups are this understanding and can put great pressure on members to be punctual and attend every meeting. In the dance group, for example, I observed members being chastised for arriving late.

'Margaret was always rushing into the rehearsal a few minutes late. With her, she brought bags of home baking and cups and flasks of tea and coffee for everyone. The other members commented on her lateness – tutting and teasing her about her time-keeping. I watched for Margaret's reaction – there was none. This continued each week, with her being called out for being late. While the others, at times, attempted to make a joke of it, I never saw Margaret join in, nor did I see her smile in response to their 'joking'. At the same time, she offered no reason for being a little late.' (fieldnotes_October_2015).

I wondered if organising the tea and coffee played a part in Margaret being a few minutes late – this was the same woman mentioned previously, who spoke about being cold in the hall. I also wondered if the group had grown so used to her bringing the hot drinks and cakes, that they were overlooking the time that may be involved – and instead of noting the kindness of her generosity, they were concentrating solely on her time-keeping.

Later on during the field work, I asked Margaret about being a few minutes late, and why the others might be so upset by it. She replied that she didn't see any great deal about being a few minutes late to the rehearsals as her part (lines) were never practiced at the

beginning of the rehearsal – and some weeks they didn't even rehearse her part, and why couldn't they just start without her – she wouldn't mind.

It actually transpired, through my fieldwork period with group, that the timing of script rehearsals changed across the various weeks – and that there were days when Margaret's part was rehearsed at the beginning of the rehearsal. It also became clearer, as the weeks passed, that other members found it helpful to know, not just their own lines, but those belonging to other cast members also. Knowing what the others were doing, allowed them to learn their own part: to know the timing of their parts more efficiently. It is an interesting concept and one that Elias refers to in 'The Society of Individuals' (2001) where he discusses the continuousness of interdependencies that occur and are required within societies and groups.

Coincidentally, a few weeks later, I arrived a little late to the rehearsal and was informed immediately upon my entrance to the room that 'Margaret was on time today – but she didn't bring any home-baking with her'. Margaret, on this occasion spoke up and said that she had been busy doing other things that morning, and hadn't had time to bake for the group.

Considerations about good/bad times are often primarily about timing, yet clock and calendar times are not the only sources of reference when considering good or bad times. In addition to the day of the week, daytime or evening, the individuals' wellbeing, skills, relationships and so on, are also factors in measuring good/bad time. These '*when*' times (Adam, 1995, p.22) can entail questions relating to social norms, traditions, beliefs, seasons – and knowledge of the past and concerns for the future - which all come together to be interwoven in judging what might be the 'right' time to participate in a particular activity. For example, the pantomime performance takes place in December to fit in with cultural tradition (in the UK) – a month of particular busyness for many individuals, especially women with families. The pantomime group begin their rehearsals

in September through to the beginning of December. Over the years, the organiser and group members realised that given the hectic nature of the month of December, it would prove beneficial to everyone involved to have the performance (and end of rehearsals) at the beginning of December – leaving the rest of the month free for other demands the women had on their lives. No-one in the group recalled having a formal discussion about this particular negotiation of time, however it was agreed by all members that ‘there was just too much to do coming up to Christmas’. Their explanation of how this arrangement came about reminds us of the various types of negotiation that often take place within groups – from very formal taking of minutes within meetings to behaviours and understanding that form over a period of time, or from someone ‘floating an idea’ – and for that idea then to be suggested by another person or by the group at a later date. In a similar way to the development of the pantomime from a ‘dance sketch’ at a party to a full hour-long pantomime performance over a number of years, the timely arrangement of the rehearsal and performance date developed in much the same way. The WFI Christmas shop on the other hand sprung up quickly from an idea at a meeting, and was very quickly put into place.

8.5 Facilitating spaces

There were some differences within the group dynamics where very close friendships were concerned. Rape Crisis volunteers, with their very solid formal rota of shifts, did not appear to form the same close relationships with other members of the centre as those noticed within the other groups. However, that is not to say that volunteers do not have a strong sense of attachment to the centre, or to other members of staff and volunteers who work there. Volunteers hold down very difficult roles, and management and staff must ensure that volunteers are not overdoing shifts and are receiving appropriate support. In the more informal setting of the line dancing group, the women

involved may be volunteering a great deal of fragmented time to the group, or to each other, in quite informal ways.

In an effort to offset the demands on volunteers, and as a means of facilitating volunteering, RC offer not only training and the prospect of progressing to a paid position within the centre, they try to offer a welcoming and warm environment for the women who support the centre. One of the first things that everyone is told is that there are always chocolate biscuits on offer for everyone. Of course, chocolate biscuits are not suitable for everyone and could be rather problematic for some.

During my time there, management were struggling with the lack of volunteer attendance at centre meetings and get-togethers so had planned a 'Pamper Day' for volunteers. Staff treated volunteers to self-care advice, hand and head massages, home baking, and a local store donated goodie bags of bath bombs and body creams to the event. The whole event was centred on 'giving something back' to the volunteers for the services that they provide to the centre – and as a way of building greater relationships between the staff and volunteers. Volunteers who work the helpline are often closed off in a small room, out of sight and communicable distance from the rest of the centre workforce. This generally inhibits relationship building, and for those volunteers who only work evening or weekend shifts, their access to building relationships is greatly reduced – and perhaps partly why few volunteers attend centre meetings. Some weeks of preparation had gone into preparing the 'Pamper Day'. Local businesses were asked if they would like to donate 'goodies' as gifts for the volunteers, and staff and friends of the centre were asked to come in and provide hand and head massages, and meditation sessions to those who attended the event.

I arrived at the centre quite early to help set up the event. Volunteers and staff had brought food and home baking – quite often a central theme to women’s gatherings, and certainly central to all RC events I have attended. The central area of the centre was arranged with chairs, sofas and large cushions, set out in the circle (Figure 3).



Figure 3: Quick sketch of RC 'pamper day'

Of all the gatherings I have attended at RC, this was, by far, the most successful in terms of attendance. Former volunteers who had left their role at RC arrived at the event and were greeted with great excitement by those who had not seen them in quite some time. The atmosphere was one of fun and friendship, and despite having been in the centre for quite a number of weeks, and having gotten to know everyone relatively well, I felt a little out of place within all the friendships. There was a real feeling of ‘happy-to-see-one-another-ness’ within the room. There was so much conversation taking place it was difficult to pick up on what was being said between the women. One volunteer had

brought her dog with her, and he enjoyed lots of attention from the people in the room. The volunteers tended to gather together within groups who had trained together. Trainees who were coming to the end of their training sessions sat together, volunteers who had trained together years before sat together – while also mixing a little with others. The event offered the opportunity to meet up with those who had gone through training together, and who didn't often get the chance to meet within the centre due to shift allocation. Three volunteers told me that they often met outside of the centre, although they didn't see each other within the centre very often. They would arrange to meet for lunch or coffee quite regularly – and considered each other as friends. Ex-volunteers brought everyone up to date with what they had been doing...and I recalled there had been some excitement about a particular volunteer who was coming who was *'just amazing!'* She was going to be giving the head massages as she had studied some form of meditation and Reiki healing.

Following an initial ice-breaking session, everyone was offered opportunity to go off for a massage/meditation session. I watched the volunteers peel off from the seated area and disappear into rooms, while others stayed and chatted with each other. The women who knew each other well stayed with each other, and I noticed one or two volunteers sitting on their own, slightly uncomfortable looking. The food table had been unveiled by this time which often helps those who are left alone at gatherings. I chose to have a hand massage by one of the paid members of staff. This ten-minute session of relaxation allowed me a brief moment to have a chat with her about the event and why it was important to do this for the volunteers. I cannot comment on all staff, but those I spoke with all remarked on the difficulty getting to know some of the volunteers, and that they understood their hesitation on attending centre meetings. This pampering event was both to say thank you to the volunteers, and to provide an opportunity to build those relationships between paid staff and volunteers by breaking down some of the more formal barriers within the centre. The day was carried out in such an informal way, that

it really worked, building up trust amongst those well-established members, and those who were new to the centre.

While the event was fun and relaxed – and quite informal, it also had some more serious purpose. Self-care sessions were taught – which is an important aspect to support work – and one that is discussed in volunteer-supervision sessions. Most of the women were dressed very casually on the day – which is not unusual for Rape Crisis workers. They are inclined to dress informally and comfortably – which can encourage an environment of equality and approachability. Some attendees of the pamper event dressed in jeans, others in skirts and blouses, however the whole ambiance was one of a much ‘lighter’ affair than is usually felt in the centre – even although, it must be said, the centre is a very warm and relaxed setting on a day to day basis. Paid staff shared information about their personal lives; their hobbies, interests, and skills outside of the centre – as a way of making better connections with volunteers. Sharing something about oneself to another person allows connections to be made on a personal level – and breaks down barriers of (real or imagined) difference. As I watched the staff do this, I reflected how often I also do this when carrying out my fieldwork: sharing with others things that I had been doing in my personal life, or humorous stories about myself.

Gift bags of toiletries had been donated by a well-known store, and all volunteers were given a bag of bath bombs, creams, and soaps before leaving for the day (Figure 4). I felt a bit of a fraud being given a bag with everyone else, and while I tried to refuse, it was insisted by staff and management that I have one. I was secretly delighted at being included – and made to feel included as a member of the centre.



Figure 4: Gift bags from RC 'pamper day'

Returning to the pantomime group of ladies, I wanted to ask them why they agreed to participate in these annual events, given that it is a commitment of twice weekly rehearsals (plus additional hours at home) for around four months in total. I expected to hear reasons that included, 'doing it for the community', or 'for a cause', or 'enjoyment'. However, all members (apart from the children) replied, 'We do it for her' (pointing to Gracie).

'She's so kind, and does so much for everyone, we can't say no. She may be a wee bit crabby (short-tempered) as the performance draws near, but she puts so much effort into all the events, it's worth it.'

I asked the women in the group to explain this further: what was it that Gracie did, that they felt they had to respond to by giving up so much of their own time? Almost at once, all answered, each telling me all of the things Gracie does to make 'people happy'. A few of the women explained that the dance group have regular weekends away together, where all different dance groups meet up. They spend the weekend in a hotel. Day-time is spent in dance workshops, and the evenings are spent dancing together for fun and showing off the new steps they have learned. Gracie travels up to these events with one or two helpers, and places chocolates and little poems on the pillows of all the hotel rooms before everyone else arrives. She then goes to the main hall and decorates all the tables. She organises raffles and prizes and games for these events. This is in addition to all the other tasks she has running the community café, her dance classes and organising the pantomime. Further, Gracie's adult daughter has a disability, and Gracie helps care for her, and her granddaughters. The time that the women in the group were giving back, wasn't just about finding time, or marking off time on their calendars, this time was about the relationships they have between one another.

The dance group annual Christmas party took place immediately after the first performance of the pantomime on a Friday evening in early December. Gracie had been in the hall since around 11.30am. I arrived around lunchtime and found the hall laid out with groups of tables and chairs. Each table had been decorated with table cloths, Christmas decorations, embroidered napkins, and laid with home baking that had been donated by the members of the dance group (Figure 5).



Figure 5: Embroidered napkins

Tables were named by groups, and the ladies from the pantomime explained that everyone had their own group of friends to sit with. Everyone always sat with the same group, although newcomers could join groups – if there were spare seats available. Each group table also had the same position within the hall each year.

Stage props and costumes for the pantomime performance had been delivered earlier in the day by family members, and Gracie was there overseeing everything. She was more than a little anxious at this point, and perhaps not in the most tolerant of moods as she tried to ensure that everything was organised and running to schedule. A fellow cast member whispered to me as I passed ‘she’ll be alright, once the performance is over’. I noticed a large sack of toys in one of the changing rooms, and asked what it was.

‘That’s Santa’s toys for the weans – we always have Santa at our parties’.

It was becoming easier to understand the self-restraint displayed by the other members of the cast and dance group during times when Gracie was fretful (or sharp with others). They were able to overlook these moments, and show self-restraint (by not reacting), because they were aware that there was another side to her: a caring, giving side to her personality that was much greater than those moments when fear and stress caused her to come across as a little irritable. This is not to suggest that these examples of self-restraint, and/or knowing when to speak and when to be silent sits easy with all group members. The relationship the women in this group have with Gracie is not a straightforward example of reciprocity. At times there was evidence of resentment at the burden of obligation members felt - because Gracie could be both kind and generous, but also quite demanding. Tensions within groups are not uncommon, but collectively accepting the overall benefit of this ‘self-sacrifice’ on these occasions is something that often comes with the experience of being a member of a group over time – and from experiencing the good parts as well as the difficulties: it is the outcome of a process whereby people balance individual and group agendas, and prioritise the ‘necessities of interdependence’ over ‘momentary inclinations’ (Elias, 2000, p.380).

8.6 Hotel California: You can never leave

Moving forward from spaces connected to groups, we can now begin to discuss the timely relations within organising meetings. However, before one can begin to discuss the details of synchronising and co-ordinating within groups of people, one must first offer some discussion of how the understanding of how time works within a community of society. Elias’s essay on time notes that ‘Time represents common features of

observable sequences which people wish to grasp by referring these to standard sequences' (1992, p.2). What Elias is referring to here is the standard or measuring of time that people use as a way of regulating their behaviour in relation to one another – and that community coherence would hardly work if we were all going around making up our own time. In that sense, Elias reminds us that one does not invent the concept of time on one's own – and that we are 'inseparable from the social institutions of time from childhood as one grows up in a society in which this concept – and its institutions - exist' (ibid., p.11). Elias referred frequently in his work to the game-like quality of social life, and time is one of the ways in which social life and games are regulated.

As children we learn the concept of time before we are even able to make sense of the symbolic placement of clock hands on clock face: bedtime, lunchtime, school time, bath time, play-time – are all elements of time that help us to regulate our behaviours in accordance with others around us (Adam, 1990, 1995, 2004; Elias, 1992; Giddens, 1984; Lefebvre, 2004). Consequently, as adults, we are able to synchronise meetings, arrive on time for trains, or get to the shops and bank before they close – *and* we can train our bodily functions accordingly.

The gradual organisation of a project, the way in which it develops, shifts and changes, allows us to also see the hidden ways in which members of groups can be drawn into the centre, gradually taking on more and more responsibilities – while simultaneously pushing others to the outskirts of the groups. Solidarity between members of the groups do not necessarily reinforce each other and can pull in different directions – some to the centre of the groups and others pushed to the periphery. As mentioned previously, there is often confusion around ideas of solidarity and alliance. It is not simply a difference in identity, political persuasion, or close friendships that cause these power differences within groups. Skills, experience, time, charisma, better health, finances, energy and/or competence are also factors which play a role (Gilchrist, 2009, 2012). Crow (2002, p.75) suggests social ties of work, leisure, neighbourhood and friendship overlap to develop

close-knit interlocking based collectives – and that shared histories within groups, developed over long periods of time strengthen these ties. However, these same shared histories and ties can alienate, or at least, exclude, others.

Within all of the groups in this study were individuals with different skills, and capabilities – from demands on their time, to their access to transport; from confidence and wellbeing, to ill-health and disability. All these varying demands allowed some members to access the groups more frequently than others – and levels of access played a powerful role in who is pushed to the periphery of the groups and who might be pulled to the centre. For those most directly in the centre of the groups – choice was not often the main aspect. Once there, it can be very difficult to step out of that centre spot. Crow (2002) draws attention to earlier observations on these centripetal and centrifugal dynamisms that pull people into the centre of a group – or push them to the periphery. These kinds of forces are very difficult to escape from, involving pressure of expectation/obligation and difficulties of saying no. For some, it may be their charismatic nature, that draws people to them and keeps people there – for others it may be a need to ‘get things done’ – leaving that individual with a greater extent of the work. For others, health, disability, and time restrictions meant that they were more inclined to the outer edges of the groups.

‘We all take turn to take the minutes, so that everyone has opportunity to learn and feel a part of the group – and so that it’s not always left to the same few people. Each person take turn to note the minutes and type them up – but more often than not, I just type them up and send them out because they’re just not done in time. I know this is my own fault for having this problem with time and that I shouldn’t do it....but I can’t help it’ (Kara (WFI)_Interview. 23.10.15)

This decision to take over and complete the task, resulted in this member being increasingly left with the majority of the group organising and administrative work. Perhaps it was just her own relationship with time that promoted a certain promptness in getting things done, while others felt more comfortable taking longer. On the other hand, this in itself might be viewed as a type of negotiation whereby people who procrastinate (for whatever reason) find that others will just get on and do something allocated to them. It also highlights the ways in which negotiation is not always explicit. It does however, highlight how as individuals, time is not experienced equally among us all.

It is not always clear why people choose to stay with organisations, or how they get pulled into the centre to become main players. However, having a certain charisma and useful skills are often partly why individuals stay with groups that they perhaps initially felt quite different from.

‘I want to sort of let people think that I drank in feminism in my mother’s milk you know. That is not the case, cos I have to confess, my mother is not anything that would even approach a feminist I’m afraid. They all seemed to be incredibly knowledgeable and of course they were all student-y types, well it seemed like that to me...therefore I just thought, they just know so much more than me.....and I’m just, I’m destined to make the tea forever more. Well, you get sucked in, it’s a kind of old ‘Hotel California’ syndrome isn’t it, you know you can never leave.’ (Rose (RC)_Feb 2016)

Rose (above) is a particularly charismatic person. Rose progressed ‘through the ranks’ of Rape Crisis to become a centre manager. She described herself as working-class, has a very strong local accent and while she may have initially considered others to ‘know much more’ than her, she is now held in high regard by staff, Third Sector, Police, politicians and service users. For reasons of confidentiality, I cannot specify the awards

that she has received to support this statement. Alison's discussion of her was that on first meeting Rose, she immediately wanted to know more about her.

'The first time I met her, I thought "Oh God, I want to know this woman. I want to listen to every word that comes out of her mouth"'
(Alison (RC)_2.9.2015)

Hyatt (2001, 2004) has discussed the theory of accidental activism: the kind of activism that people just fall into or find themselves in. The women for independence group could be said to fall into this category. Inspired by the Scottish Independence movement, they found other women of similar beliefs and quickly became part of a bigger movement – campaigning not only for independence for their country, but for greater empowerment for women in politics and everyday life, and better futures for their communities. For some of these women, this movement was an extension of earlier women's campaigns of which they had been part, for others it was the first time they had campaigned, protested or thought of themselves as activists.

Ailsa, who had approached me at the WFI open day, but was not a member of the group who were part of this study, had travelled around 40 miles to attend the event. She told me she had been inspired and 'on a high' since becoming a member of the national WFI. Since joining she had travelled by bus and train to attend conferences, speeches, WFI events the length and breadth of Scotland. She spoke quickly and with an excitement about what she felt was happening politically in Scotland, and women's role in all of this. Her local group was doing little at that period and she was desperate for them to 'get busy again' in her community. When I met Ailsa it was the late summer of 2015. The Independence referendum, and following UK General Elections, (in which the WFI members campaigned tirelessly), had taken a toll on some of the local branches, and who, at this point, were taking a rest for fear of burning out. Nicole, the first WFI member

I met, had previously explained that as an organisation, they understood the need for women to step back occasionally. They had families, friends, jobs that were also important to their lives, and in order for the organisation to last the test of time, smaller groups may occasionally have to have some periods of time when little happened.

‘...you can drop out for six months. Come and go and take that pressure off you. The number of times I’ve emailed people. “Don’t pressurise yourself – this is fun, if nothing happens for two months, nothing happens for two months!”’ (Nicole_Interview_29.6.15)

Ailsa had joined relatively recently, and was still in a period of excitement for everything that the organisation had to offer, and feeling a little deflated and frustrated that her own local group were not active at that point. Within WFI, those members from community local branches who have progressed to national level, appear to have strong feminist views and related to ideas of ‘sisterhood’, while those at local level not so much – and may reveal some ways in which members are drawn to the centre of groups through shared political or feminist beliefs – leaving others behind.

Back at Rape Crisis, one of the volunteer support workers who had taken on extra (paid) roles within the centre during a pilot study of a new project found herself often called out in the middle of the night to support service users. The volunteer worker then had to attend her main paid employment next morning having been awake for a great deal of the previous evening/night. This unsuitability of these ‘standby’ hours suggested that this arrangement for this volunteer could not work. The project continued but with a reduced accessibility when it was decided that a 24-hour service was not required, and paid staff took on the role of call-out work.

‘The [project] was wonderful and it was paid work, but it was.... Being on call through the night when you have other jobs nearly killed me. Particularly the day when I had just finished at [paid employment] and got a phone call from the police and had to head straight out to the police station and stay there all night, and that was my birthday last year. I had [paid employment] the following day, luckily I was starting a wee bit later than normally, so I managed to get about four hours sleep’. (Alison(RC)_Interview. 2.9.2015)

This particular volunteer later confided that while the paid work allowed her to feel a ‘real part’ of the centre, her home circumstances (omitted for reasons of confidentiality) meant that she was unable to continue with the paid role as described above. While she enjoyed the role over her other areas of employment, the ‘on-call’ nature of this work, and the strict working hours of her main employment, meant that she had to give up this preferred role within the centre. The feeling of belonging that she experienced while in this role, diminished a little when she could no longer sustain it – even though she continued to volunteer in other aspects within the centre. Her involvement in the project pulled her to the centre of the organisation and provided her with a feeling of belonging, however, her lack of disposable time, while holding down two jobs, pushed her to the periphery of the group through being unable to manage the hours – and perhaps through feeling that she had somehow let others down by being unable to sustain this arrangement.

Lilith, a member of the dance group described how in previous years she had made attempts to participate in the group activities, but for a variety of reasons, had to pull out.

‘I’ve been going to [dancing] for five years, but about 25 years ago I went but it didn’t fit in with my work as I wasn’t getting in from my work until half five at night, and then was trying to get back out for six o’clock so I only done it for one night a week and I done it for about six

months and then I went “oh no, I cannae handle it, getting in at half five and back out again”, so I gave it up.’ (Lilith (TR)_Interview_8.2.2016)

Lilith had also been a cast member in one of the previous years’ pantomimes, but found herself becoming so anxious for fear forgetting her lines (through lack of time for rehearsing at home, and having not developed the same level of confidence as others had) that she had to give it up. The pressure of learning her part and ‘getting it right’ was too much for her. She did admit to loving the camaraderie of the activities, and so has continued to help out by doing what she described as ‘odd jobs’. Taking on the tasks of ‘odd jobs’ on a more relaxed time schedule removed the ‘not-good-enough’ factor that was impacting on her sense of belonging, allowing Lilith to feel valued as a member of the group.

Some weeks later, I was observing the group of dancers while they rehearsed for the pantomime. I had been participating with the group activities up to this point by helping create stage props, and music/sound editing. Suddenly, my participation took on a greater role, and I was asked to step in and cover a part for the evening (a member had become anxious about playing a certain role in the performance). The following week when I returned to observe the progress of the rehearsals, I was handed a bag of clothing and told ‘That’s your costume’. Without any real discussion, or negotiation, I had been drawn into the group as a cast member.

‘Do you see how easy it is to be dragged in?’ (Beth (TR)_Fieldnotes_15.10.215)

Being drawn into the centre can of course be through choice, as can finding voice to say ‘No’ by someone who was previously in the centre of the action. Lilith described how she

found herself doing too many voluntary activities, that she had no time for herself. During her interview, Lilith spoke about stepping down from another voluntary role, and relaxing more – taking a nap in the afternoon, or sitting quietly with a book. Lilith did go on to tell me that her health was beginning to suffer from the number of community-related activities she had been engaged with, and she had to make the decision to cut back on some. She did however insist that she still helped out, albeit on a more (than previous) informal basis. She didn't want to be tied to schedules, or expectations that she could not sustain – which often left her feeling guilty for letting others down. It was easier to pull out, and help out occasionally when she was able.

However, as I became aware, it is not always so easy to refuse a group request – especially those engaging in unpaid work. Additionally, members can often feel a sense of obligation to reciprocate kindness, or go along with dominant figures. I myself felt that I owed it to the group in some way to help them out – and to give something back to them in return for agreeing to be part of this study. This shift in my role, helped me understand the obligation that groups members, and women often face – of putting the group before oneself. My participation in the performance, however, changed and shaped the research in a way I had not planned (as discussed in the methods chapter).

Powerful barriers that are situated in time often prevent those with least agency from becoming, or feeling like, valued members of groups, and from participating in forms of civic engagement. These examples of members being pulled to the centre and/or pushed to the periphery of groups reveal the subtle ways that 'forces' impact on the individuals' ability to engage with volunteering. It's easy to see how, once attached to a group, one can get drawn into participating more than one had initially planned – as noted in Rose's comment on the RC centre being like 'Hotel California'. During my time with the dance/pantomime group, I received a call from one of the members asking if I could help out by driving another member to the rehearsal space.

I was called by a member of the group to ask if I could help take Clair and her wheelchair to the group meeting. Her mother who usually takes her is going to be away and no-one else has a car big enough to hold the wheelchair. Other members of the group drove to Clair's house to pick up one of her children, while another member remained at her home with her other child until her husband arrived home from work (fieldnotes_Nov, 2015)

In this case, the choice of who was drawn into this circle of 'help' was based on geographical elements – who lived closest to the ones in need. However, other demands on the life of a volunteer also impact their ability to engage with a group.

'I used to go on a Sunday too but had to stop because of my dad. I had no-one else to look after him. So I just go on a Wednesday now' (Katherine_ interview 2.11.2015)

Benenson and Stagg raise particular awareness to difficulties for low-income and marginalised volunteers, and the ways in which the language around volunteering discounts those who 'help-out' in more informal ways: 'Limiting what counts as volunteering excludes the rich legacy of informal helping and mutual aid that sustains well-being in many marginalized communities' (2016, p.135). However, more than this, it can also prevent those who do support their communities in these ways from feeling valued.

8.7 Facilitating process

The shift to the new rota system was a preferable arrangement for volunteers. This was not simply due to being able to plan ahead, but because callers got to know when they would be 'on shift' and would call back when they knew a particular helpline worker was on. This allowed volunteers to feel a certain kind of satisfaction for the work they were doing through this process of continuity. The difficulty of doing helpline work is that one never quite knows if their support is doing any good. The volunteers who work on the helpline at times get little closure. They leave the call not knowing for sure if they have been of help or not, so in a way, for them to get an understanding of someone's progression through being able to speak to the person over a period of time, allows them at least some kind of knowledge that the time they dedicate to the centre is making a difference. Busy people's lives can be complicated and the organising of time can be meddlesome and chaotic. Having another person take some of that pressure away by bringing some structure to your schedule can be empowering, rather than disempowering (Holmes, 2002; Roberts, 2002; Wajcman, 2016).

Asking all the women in the study how they viewed being part of their groups or communities brought forth a range of answers, but what did become apparent was how this sense of belonging, and becoming a part of a group or organisation or community was a process of emergence over time. Frances, when talking about her progression to feeling part of her community through her involvement in the WFI group, spoke of a local café where she had begun to make a point of visiting occasionally in an attempt to get to know her community.

'I can go in there on my own now and feel quite comfortable, and I do feel, perhaps in wee tiny ways, you become part of your community by doing that. I'm not doing anything; I'm just sitting there' (Frances (WFI)_Interview_Nov2015)

This not doing anything, just sitting there in the community space, is part of a process of socialisation that Elias discusses. Frances discusses the process of isolating herself from the community she lives in and going back and forth to her previous community, however since joining the local WFI groups, she feels a new sense of desiring better links to her immediate community, and so has begun this process by visiting the local café.

‘people get to know your name, your likes and dislikes...and maybe from being there, they can learn a bit about what we are trying to do’
(Frances_Interview_Nov2015)

Frances, who was also a member of an SNP group, preferred what she called the ‘organic nature’ of the group of women in this study.

‘I like the organic nature of the group. There is no real structure, there’s no boundaries and I’ve spoken to a few people because I’ve now got back on a level of committee with SNP branch, and it [the SNP] is a different kind of organisation, and they are bound by it [organisation guidelines]. I find myself wanting to shout out “Just let us talk”, and I think that’s what WFI allows’.

However, Frances went on to say that she was also a member of another WFI group, where the structure was more hierarchical. She believed the group (in the study), where she engaged most, did have structure, but it was more fluid in the sense that everyone was given the opportunity to lead. Members would come with ideas for projects, and

lead those particular projects, while others would take on roles, in relation to their skills or time availability.

‘there is structure there, but it is in a fluid way, but I think that is, well I don’t know what it is reflecting because the other branch of WFI is more structured and I get the impression that some people there think there is more of a hierarchy there in the group or they would like there to be more of a hierarchy in the group’ (Frances (WFI)_Interview November, 2015).

Their shared (although I am unsure if all local branches agree) understanding is that women’s time is often restricted, and that if there is a crisis at home, then it is often the women’s time that is sacrificed.

‘Inevitably, because of the nature of gender, if there is a crisis of some kind the woman is the one whose plans for the day will be cancelled...that’s true and you see that in the attrition rates and things will... we’ve always been really keen to push WFI to push this idea that you don’t need to go to every meeting, you don’t.’ (Nicole_Interview_29.6.15)

This is a really good ideology to have within less formal community groups if possible, and something that might be shared among community-led projects via WFI. The empowering nature of members being able to choose their time and pace may be a method of preventing people leaving by offering the women more agency in who gets use of their time without having to feel guilty about letting others down. However, this would be very difficult to sustain in many voluntary projects that involve deadlines and regular attendance.

Both Rape Crisis and WFI work collectively with their volunteers and group members – emphasising process as part of their goal. This of course can be lengthy and difficult. For both of these groups, their ‘work processes should reflect their political beliefs’ (Holmes, 2002, p.47), and by making decisions by consensus rather than voting – no matter how long it takes. This (WFI) group time spent in process was worth it and satisfying for members of a grass-roots organisation still in relatively early stages. Placing process as an emphasis may make organisations and groups more democratic in nature, however they are lengthy and time consuming. There can be tensions around ‘doing things ‘right’ and ‘doing things properly’ – and how this is subjective to the individual with regard to keeping everyone happy.

Frances’s observations about the group’s fluidity highlighted the importance of meeting the needs of all members: some members preferring time to chat, while others wanted to stick to and get through an agenda. Groups such as WFI have members with varying skills and while some might ‘fly’ through an agenda with ease, others require more time for explanation. Some of the women coming to WFI had little experience or knowledge of political discourse. They had been inspired by the Independence Campaign and its affiliation with ‘hope’, but had previously felt so disconnected from the male-dominated landscape of politics, they often needed extra time to understand the issues being discussed within meetings. The opportunity to chat allowed this process of learning to take place at a pace that suited them.

Nevertheless, there were individuals within the WFI group who did not appreciate this lengthier process of talking. Rhona and Aileen wanted ‘action’: sticking to agendas and making plans at a pretty fast pace: “Don’t talk, just do”.

Dark red, black and midnight blue
The colour of scowling
In a very long tunnel

I am “Don’t talk – Do!”
Go and achieve at something real
Needed
And wishing not to be needed
I am woman for Independence
(RF. WFI. 2016)

There are always members of groups who are quite happy to just go along with the flow – they like to turn up and help out, but not really have too much say, or don’t want too many formalities and responsibilities. Elyse from the dance group told me ‘I just do it for Gracie – I suppose I’m just a bit of a joiner’ [rather than a leader].

Discussing this very issue with another volunteer from another group, a participant commented on the importance of spanning generations and how time for learning can be condensed when learning takes place within groups, and especially between generations within organisations.

‘I think it’s so important within social justice movements to give links to communities ... so that you have that link across generations because I can sit down and chat to someone who is from my parents’ generation and within five minutes of talking to them I can learn lessons that they have taken thirty years to learn’ (Millie (RC)_Interview 4.9.15)

Negotiations between members may be less formal within smaller groups than those within larger, more formal organisations. However, lengthy discussion can leave members feeling ‘paralysed’ by ongoing discussion and a ‘structurelessness’ that often ends with no formal decision-making taking place. (Holmes, 2002, p.47). This process/product conflict (ibid) was visible in both WFI and TR groups that function on a less formal basis than Rape Crisis – and who do depend on funding-related decisions being made. Finding a working balance between what is good for the group while

meeting the needs of the individual members is a dilemma for many community groups (Gilchrist, 2009).

8.8 Styles of negotiating within organisations

Balancing what works best for groups through negotiation isn't as straightforward as always having a regular discussion and everybody always feeling that they've had their say. Sometimes a pattern of behaviour takes place over a period of time, or negotiations take place whereby someone has 'floated' an idea sometime previously, planting a seed so to speak, so that at a later point it may seem like a group idea, or someone else's idea, but in fact it has been suggested beforehand.

This became apparent during the pantomime rehearsals as the women would discuss back and forth ideas for the script – and then as they rehearsed their lines and parts, and positioned their bodies on the 'stage', ideas would emerge and the development of the storyline would take on a new meaning. It was quite easy to notice ideas that had been floated in the previous weeks, or ad-lib lines that had been thrown in, suddenly developed a new extended role in the storyline – allowing all the members to feel a sense of ownership of the project they were working on.

'Sometimes, we can see how it is developing as we go through the script' (Bella Interview)

Concerns about timing weren't only focused on scripts and acting. On a number of occasions, members spoke of 'being behind' and that previous years had seen the rehearsals be more developed than they were this year.

The pantomime group have increasingly included members' grandchildren in the performances. The dance instructor who organises the pantomime is particularly keen

to 'do things for the weans'. During one of my visits to rehearsal, the children had been particularly energetic, and had been provided with paper and writing materials and asked to go and write a song while the women discussed the development of the script. The children were also offered opportunity to invent their own character names, and to design their own costumes. However, I am not convinced their designs were fully incorporated into their costumes (Figure 6).

The rehearsal space was quite chaotic today. The children were being particularly noisy and running around, interrupting the ladies as they worked on the script. The children were given paper/pens and instructed to go off to one of the tables at the far end of the hall to write a song and create their own character names. They were given some background information about the song (Heigh-Ho), but were also told that as it was their song, they could decide on the words they wanted. They were also given pens and paper to draw ideas for costumes. (Fieldnotes_Oct 2015)



Figure 6: Children's drawings

This negotiation over the shared time and space allowed the women to focus on the collaborative writing and development of the script, providing them with a break from the excitable children, while still allowing both children and adults to feel some ownership of the space. Delegating jobs to the children was described as allowing them some ownership of the pantomime development. What it actually appeared to be was a way of keeping the children occupied while the women discussed the development of the script. The women in the group explained that the numbers of children in the pantomime were increasing each year – and that there were some concerns about this from some of the group members. I had assumed that the women were having to negotiate the demands of being involved in the pantomime group while also looking after grandchildren to help out their own adult children. This was correct to some extent, but it also emerged that Gracie mandated that children should be part of the pantomime – and so the lack of choice here was not simply because of family commitments, but also due to hierarchical positions within the group. Appropriate content of the pantomime was also mentioned: some of the scenes were rather ‘saucy’ and some members felt that these were not suitable for the children. However, this was ‘brushed off’ by Gracie – and her decision not to take these concerns on-board were accepted (somewhat grudgingly) by the rest of the group.

One of the findings I am keen to highlight is that of negotiations of time with people who are very busy: how this might be done, and what are the decisions we make in communities, and in research, around appropriate use of our own, and other people's time. There is value to visiting understandings or notions about the 'right use of time' and hierarchies of how things should be done 'properly' or within boundaries of time restraints. Belonging and community may therefore be about nuances: understanding time as being connected with different aspects of ourselves and others, and resisting the lure of unity that suggest we can only respond to one value of ourselves or principle at a time. There is also a process of knowledge within all of the groups here: the sharing of

skills and knowledge between generations, and knowledge shared and learned over a condensed period of time – but there is also an ongoing process of knowledge and learning that takes place within all of the groups and all the members that is fragmented and gradual and happens through the relationships and bonds that are formed between members of the respective groups.

8.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter has provided insights into how groups and organisations can facilitate spaces for women to ‘volunteer’ – and the benefits for more marginalised groups with regard to strengthening ties with others. Having groups that accommodate skills-sharing at differing levels of pace, various forms of what we might understand as volunteering, and opportunity to have some fun may allow these women to invest in social relationships in ways that some formal volunteering excludes. However, we can also see that in most cases, the balance between the I-we shifts toward the we as individual members are inclined to agree to things for the sake of the group, or where members are discouraged from going against the group – or there is ‘deep-rooted’ value attached to ‘collective pride’ (Elias and Scotson, 1994, p.105) of the group.

Elias talks about the civilisation process and at one level, because civilization precedes any one individual, that can be like people being socialised to conform to how things are, and belonging can be seen to be a part of this conforming. However, we can also think about de-civilisation and the loss of established procedures, so it’s not just one long trajectory of people becoming more and more refined, but it’s also about ‘how does change come about? And change isn’t necessarily about everyone adapting to the existing way of doing things otherwise change wouldn’t happen at all, but some people are able to find a way of inserting a modification of practice. So change comes about by not everyone conforming to the group norm, and we can relate this to Margaret and her

flasks of tea and coffee. If conforming, Margaret may have thought, 'Others seem to be ok sitting here in this cold hall and not having tea...so I'll just have to get used to it', and that would be a way of conforming, but she doesn't, she decides that she has enough self-belief and motivation to say 'it doesn't have to be like that' and is going to bring tea. And so she started a new pattern. She began bringing tea to help her feel comfortable and because she felt enough of a sense of belonging to do so - and she also wanted to share *her* sense of belonging with the group. However, people's senses of belonging are very individual. An individual might say "I feel I belong here". However, others might say 'I don't think it is just down to you. You may think you belong, but actually until we give you the approval, you don't' – so if everyone had shunned Margaret with her tea... 'No we don't want your tea' then there would be a problem.

So we can see how it takes a balance and some agreement by both parties for a volunteer to fit in with the group. We can see how organisations have developed very different ways of creating spaces where volunteers can fit. Perhaps not all women and not all people all of the time but enough people can meet those requirements to fit with the organisations. A group or organisation has to have those things in place if volunteering is going to work but it's not a sufficient condition because for people to fit into the organisations, people also have to square it with their domestic situation, friends and work organisation.

9. Have we got time for this? negotiation with significant others

This chapter continues to explore how the balance between the we-I can shift toward the 'we' due to sheer number of interrelated circumstances affecting a person and the powerful pull that they exert: investigating the processes of negotiation within groups of community volunteers, and the ways the women involved manage and organise their time and involvement in relation to their particular forms of volunteering, according to other factors within their lives - their families, workmates, friends, neighbours.

Having approached (or been approached by) an organisation and perhaps filled out application forms, the individual may want to take this to their families and/or places of employment, who might say, well it's not just about you, it's also going to impact on us – so have *we* got time for *you* to do this? Elias's theory of interdependence does, after all, propose that a person's time sovereignty is not solely theirs but also belongs to others in their configuration of relationships.

Responsibilities between and within family members – and friends and work colleagues - are not simply straightforward products of rules of obligation; they are, in most cases, the products of negotiation (Finch and Mason, 1993, pp.60-61). The women in this study often did not have a lot of time to spare, but yet were still able to combine what has been called the 'triple work burden' of paid work, family life and community activity (Grimshaw, 2011; Hainard and Verschuur, 2001; May, 1997). However, rather than see their work in the community or voluntary sphere as a *burden*, many of the women in the study saw it as beneficial to their well-being.

Reflecting back to the beginning of my PhD, I recall some observations and conversations that I had with some women from my local community. In the summer of 2014, during the Scottish Independence Referendum campaign, I met up with some local residents while they were canvassing and leafleting in my local community. This group of men and

women met weekly in a local heritage centre, usually around 6.30pm, where they would discuss and organise their walking routes while filling their canvassing bags with leaflets and canvassing forms. On observation I noticed that many of the female members of the group often seemed a bit harassed and hurried as they arrived – more so than the male members, who would stroll into the building with an apparent ease – relaxed and cheerful looking. The women later spoke to me, and to each other, of rushing in from work, often having not eaten, or maybe only having had a sandwich before coming out to begin their canvassing. They discussed how messy their homes were, or of not having done any ironing for weeks, or how their cupboards were bare – and their children complaining that their mums hadn't been doing the usual grocery shopping. On the whole, they described the many ways in which household chores or routines had been put on the back burner as their political canvassing hours increased. More than once, one woman or another told me that they were looking forward to the referendum date so that they could get back to their 'old routines'. It struck me how often the women in the group spoke about having to negotiate various aspects of their lives in order to attend these activities in a way that none of the men in the group spoke of. Perhaps the men hadn't thought of these things, however, it was these meetings with this group that initially piqued my attention to the difficulties women often have finding and making time to participate in forms of civic engagement.

As the fieldwork of this research got underway, the conversations from these earlier meetings within women from my own community were often repeated by the women participating in my study.

'Worked late, got home, quick roll and a quick wash and back out, all in 40 mins. Not bad – got it down to a fine art' (Diary 3: 3.12.2015)

‘During panto season, we live by our calendars. When it comes to this time of year, we block off a whole section from the calendar. Every Sunday and Thursday during these months is for rehearsal practice, but we also have to make time for practicing too so everything else gets put on hold’ (Beth and Bella (TR)_Interview: 22.10.2015)

Finch (1989) raises attention to other (much older) studies (Bott 1957; Young and Willmott 1957) which argue that it is families who see each other frequently where one finds most practical support being given – and that it is often women who are most active in keeping in touch with relatives. It is not surprising then, that they are involved in the giving and receiving of support. While this is a positive supportive method within families for the person receiving the support, it similarly puts pressure on family members to ‘keep up kinship obligations’ (Bott, 1957, p.133). Elias and Scotson’s study of community relations makes similar observations where working in a factory near to their home enabled ‘younger women to leave their children with “granny” or an elderly aunt while they went to work’. The phenomenon of older relatives taking on child-care responsibilities was treated as ‘part of a woman’s role and inclination’. This care was also mentioned as a reason for women with dependent children who had been geographically mobile to return to Winston Parva in order ‘to be “near mum”’. No instances of men being similarly central to kinship groups were found, despite the researchers having actively ‘looked out for’ such cases (Elias and Scotson, 1994, pp.31-2, 46, 47, 45).

Similar findings are reported in Goodwin and O’Connor’s study: ‘it is to carer roles that many.... women returned in later life, combining care for grandchildren in order that their own children may develop their own careers’ (2015, p.160). It was not unusual for the older women in my own study to relate details of their daily routines which involved taking care of their grandchildren, and helping with their adult children’s household

chores - or even pets. Younger women in the study talked about balancing career and voluntary work with caring for their families, including visiting or helping out their elderly parents. Retired women who participated (in this study) often had to organise their volunteering around the care of their grandchildren. Others, as a means of attending to their voluntary and leisure pursuits, included their grandchildren in the community projects of which they were part.

9.1 It starts off by doing someone a favour

Negotiations with others also take into account the process of societal change that allows women into community volunteering more often: Husbands/partners who take more of an active share of child care and housework, and employers who are increasingly sympathetic to employees' voluntary commitments and family life through offering flexi-time employment. However other types of negotiation are often developed over time between family members - or can change over time according to home circumstances.

Finch and Mason (1993, pp.60–96) discuss types of family negotiations: implicit and explicit. Explicit negotiations are described as 'open, round-the-table discussions', prompted by specific needs and events. These might occur in circumstances where family members consult with one another and discuss who might offer help to another family member. Explicit negotiation also can occur in anticipation of future events, (birth of a new child/grandchild, or even, as in this study, a future event within the women's voluntary practices). The key point here is that they involve open discussion in which two or more parties attempt to develop a shared understanding or some form of agreement of where the balance of responsibility to give and receive help lies. This type of negotiation was observable within the three groups during meetings, event planning, script development and rota scheduling. However, within families and everyday shared activities, negotiations are not always quite so obvious.

Implicit negotiation differs from explicit negotiation: there is no open discussion, yet in all sorts of ways, people find methods of communicating with each other about kinds of responsibilities and roles they regard as acceptable to them and others in their lives: 'planting a seed' of an idea; falling into roles observed within one's family. These things can often happen gradually over time, perhaps even without parties being aware, so much so that when a crisis occurs, or a situation arises, it seems obvious who will help out by looking after sick children, or grandchildren, or even pets.

'Got a call at 7.45am. Grandson ill, can I watch him. No long lie.'
(Diary 2: Entry 12.1..15

The needs of family members cannot be neatly pushed into pre-determined time allowance or timetables. Needs vary from day to day and unexpected events can occur that impact on women's time and agency (Davies, 1990, p.106). Couples might traditionally be understood to set up home together, and over time learn to negotiate their roles within the family home (Mansfield and Collard, 1988), bringing with them a stock of knowledge – roles learned from their own families growing up, and which they build upon as they negotiate their own roles within their new home - and public lives outside of the home. However, such negotiations are not necessarily 'negotiations between parties of equal bargaining strength'. Relationships are influenced by numerous factors which frequently favour the male bread-winner's often higher income (Allan and Crow, 2001, pp.204-5). Typically, these roles are inclined not to change much over time: it would hardly be ideal to be constantly having family meetings to decide and negotiate who was doing what (the washing up, or taking the bins out), and so families tend to settle into roles within the home without constant explicit negotiation. However as social and family life changes, and/or as people age, roles in families change and new negotiations often have to be developed.

This was apparent in many of the interviews with the women in this study. Each relayed in some way changes that had occurred in their home lives and routines, whether that be down to taking on a greater role at work, looking after relatives, sudden changes or traumatic events, or engaging more often in voluntary practices. There is also the idea of the 'life cycle of care' – and as children require less care as they grow up, ageing parents need more.

Following my period of fieldwork at Rape Crisis, I heard from Emilia who told me that she (regrettably) had given up her voluntary work to care for her mother who had developed a serious illness. The decision to leave her voluntary role was based on both the wish to care for her mother, and the lack of child care for her children during any volunteering hours now that her mother was unable to help out. Emilia's paid employment allowed her some flexibility around the hours she worked which would allow her to take her mother to hospital appointments when required.

Margaret (TR) is retired but often takes in friends' ironing to make a little extra money. Margaret spoke about how helping out can often escalate to the point of it intruding on one's own time more than is always sensible, or that one is fully happy with. Margaret used to do her daughter's ironing while she looked after her grandchildren when they were younger, and this role has now extended outside the family circle, to where she now does the ironing for friends (in return for small payment). Margaret also presently looks after her adult children's pets while the owners are at work. This agreement previously was one where Margaret would visit the home and take (one) dog out for a walk at lunchtime. However, the owners have acquired a second dog, which as a puppy needed looking after full-time. Even though the dog is no longer a puppy, Margaret now has the younger dog at her home each day while the owners are at work. Recently, Margaret and her husband were going to the funeral of a friend which was taking place a few hours' drive away. Margaret was concerned about the welfare of the dog and asked the owners if they could change their shifts at work so that Margaret could attend

the funeral. There was some uncertainty over whether this would be possible, and Margaret was anxious that she would not be able to attend the funeral.

'You start off doing someone a favour and before you know it, you are having to ask permission to do what you want to do, or so that you can go somewhere' (Margaret_Informal conversation).

We can see how this type of implicit negotiation builds up over time, and other expectations are put on people. Margaret was 'forced' to work around all these things she was doing for her family and her own activities were sometimes sacrificed.

A similar observation was made in Crow et al.'s study where neighbours voiced concern about being drawn into 'neighbouring commitments': 'a number of small things can add up to a significant commitment' (2002, p.140). Margaret's description of how helping others can escalate without any real open negotiation is something also previously discussed by Finch and Mason (1993). While there may have been some explicit and open discussion about Margaret attending the funeral, there was an implication that events or circumstances such as this occurring had not been previously discussed. It would appear that it was assumed by Margaret's pet-owning family members that because Margaret had looked after their first dog, that she would be willing and able to look after a second – and as a long-term arrangement. While the pet owners both worked, only one worked full-time with the other having previously only worked two days per week. However, over a short period of time this increased to four days – without any real re-negotiation over the care of the dog taking place. Margaret's remark about how 'doing favours' can escalate to something much more time-consuming draws attention to the ways in which helping out within families is often more one-sided than equal, or reciprocal. Margaret is seen here to be calibrating her time to that of her adult child and spouse, because, given that they are in paid employment, their time might be seen as

more important - or more difficult to negotiate. This also draws in Hochschild's (1978) idea about involuntary altruism and people who end up, by their position, doing or taking on more than it might be sensible for them to choose to do, and the hidden cost attached to such behaviour where it extends to self-sacrifice (Gilligan, 1982). It also helps us see a relation between these unequal negotiations and Elias's we-I balance.

It was common to hear many women in the study intimate that perhaps they were 'taking on too much'. There were countless times when I heard the phrase 'not enough hours in the day', or even suggestions of women agreeing to something that perhaps they really didn't want to – and I will expand on this in the following chapter. A conversation with Marjorie also raised the subject of how doing things for others can escalate quite easily. The following is an excerpt from my interview with her. We had been discussing the idea of letting others down, however Marjorie's statement about being asked to do something, and then it escalating into something else, is an example of implicit negotiation that often occurs within families.

R: Can you tell me a little about attending (meetings/events) when you are tired/exhausted, or when you have other commitments?

M: It depends on what it is, if it's something that is needing done, then babysitting, yes, but when you've had her [grandchild] all day and they ask for you to take her at night, you do it, but you're physically tired too, but you want to give your kids the best chance to do what they want to do (Marjorie (WFI)_Interview: 16.12.2015)

We can see how aspects of gender and class play a significant role in the negotiations of care within households and families (Finch and Mason, 1993). It is not simply the children or parents who are providing care for the other members of the family, but daughters and mothers. Other aspects of this also appear to be built upon the previous

relationships involved. We can see from Marjorie's and Margaret's accounts that their previous relationship as carer for their children, has expanded to where they continue in this role through the care of their grandchildren and adult children's pets. This is not a new phenomenon, and has been highlighted by previous studies (Elias and Scotson, 1994; Hochschild, 1978, 1983) and more recently (Goodwin and O'Connor, 2015).

Elyse told a similar tale when discussing looking after her grandchildren. She spoke of having little time for herself as the number of grandchildren increased, and while she did not express any real problems with this during her interview (her diary told something quite different), she did mention that she felt her daughter did not have to work as the family were financially secure. This expression that her daughter did not have to work, hinted that perhaps Elyse thought that her daughter could actually be at home more often, rather than Elyse having to take care of her grandchildren – which impacted on her ability to attend her own leisure and voluntary activities.

'Sometimes it is hard for me to make the meetings or to go to as many events as I would like. I look after my grandchildren during the day and sometimes in the evening so that my daughter can work' (Elyse (TR)_Interview. 27.10.2015)

Elyse also discussed doing her daughter's ironing because she 'didn't like to sit about for two hours'. It was clear from her statement that no formal or explicit discussion about the ironing had taken place - but it also draws attention to a relationship with time that Elyse has, one where, even though she is tired, she feels that resting or 'sitting about' is an inefficient use of time. Elyse had also discussed her own working hours when she had been a young mother herself, and spoke about fitting her working hours around her children's school hours - and not having to depend on her mother.

‘I was the [job title] for [employer], but I did it because I worked during the day, 9[am]– 3[pm] and I could put the kids to school and be there when they came home. I used to go out to work at night and my husband was home by that time so I wasn't too dependent on my mum or anything.’ (Elyse (TR)_Interview. 27.10.2015)

Elyse was one of four participants who completed a diary. On the day that Elyse handed her diary to me, she stated ‘I never realised how boring my life is’. I expected to find a diary with few entries, or entries filled with repetitive routines. However, I discovered recollections about theatre visits, weekends away, friends who had come to visit, and inspirational movies she had been to watch at the cinema. These entries of course, were interspersed with family commitments, and on reading through her diary, I wondered why she felt her life was boring. Like the unemployed women in Davies’s study who felt ‘deprived of contact with the outside world’ (1990, p.128) Elyse perhaps felt that her days were mainly taken up with her grandchildren’s care – and unable ‘to go to as many events as I would like’. Her life wasn’t boring, but perhaps in her opinion it might be more exciting and fulfilling if she had fewer family commitments to attend to.

‘What would families do without grandmothers? Always seem to be arranging my time around school hours’ (Diary 4: Entry Nov 3rd 2015)

In her discussions of women’s time and unemployment, Karen Davies builds upon Kildal's observations where ‘leisure cannot be enjoyed..... due to the conception of time which permeates our society – where the future is all important and where punctuality and efficiency are prized. Time which is not used in an efficient manner is seen as wasted

time' (Kildal, 1987, p.74, cited in Davies, 1990, p.128). The relevance of this to the study of volunteering is that women, over their lives, become accustomed to juggling commitments in time – and as Elyse and Margaret highlight, these commitments to others often make it difficult for the women 'to go to as many events as I [they] would like' without 'asking permission' to do so.

Asking about the participant's home life brought forth a whole array of negotiations that the women in the study make around spending time with others, and making time for themselves. Their work in the community does not however prevent them continuing to be identified with the home. When discussing timely negotiations within families and friends, some participants spoke of not only having to fit time around (their families') household chores, but also that they had to also 'manage' or oversee tasks that others family members do in the home.

Clair, who is now disabled following a severe illness, spoke of the ways in which her husband often didn't notice tasks that needed doing around the home. Clair has had to give up paid employment following her illness, but works voluntarily, with support from her mother, in a local community centre where she does some of the accounting work in a voluntary role.

'My husband was on nightshift this week and woke up early, so he was up at 4 o'clock (pm). I was sitting in the kitchen making the girls' dinner and making our dinner and trying to get the washing sorted, and he was sitting watching telly, but he doesn't think there is anything wrong with that because he goes out and works, so it's my job... If I say, "go and walk the dog for me", he will get up and do it, so it's not that he doesn't want to do it, he just doesn't think.'
(Clair (TR)_Interview, 12.2.2016).

Emilia spoke of husbands who describe looking after their own children as 'babysitting', and that it was often the women who had to arrange for this to happen.

'Men often just go out – they don't have to arrange for someone to watch the kids, but if the mum wants to go out, she has to make sure that someone is there for the children. If I am working, or volunteering, it's me who has to arrange the child care or ask my husband if he can pick the kids up. He never makes these arrangements, or even thinks about it. He'll happily do it – but I have to organise it all' (Emilia (RC)_18.7.2015)

It is often seen as women's responsibility to ensure the smooth running of the home, and a consistent finding of researchers. Allan and Crow highlight women 'negotiating from a position of relative weakness' (2001, p.205), so that any difficulties arising from juggling domestic work, paid work, and in this study, voluntary work, are simply part of the choices made by women. Even those participants who felt their household chores were equally shared, when questioned, admitted that they did more than their 'fair share' and that husbands often need to be asked.

'Now I tend to do the cleaning, but my husband does most of the cooking... I probably do more, but I think that's just the general thing with women and men, [men] kind of act daft sometimes so you are quicker doing it yourself. If you said 'go and run a Hoover over that', he would go and do it. He needs to be told sometimes, or asked... he doesn't do it on his own initiative.' (Marjorie (WFI)_Interview: 16.12.15)

Feminist scholars (Gerstel, 2000; Hochschild, 2012; Kramarae, 2001) have raised this issue before, highlighting not only the unpaid physical and emotional work that women do at home in relation to housework and child care, but in relation to managing the home, and managing the tasks of others – a role often well-paid in project management, and a role that is particularly skilful and valued in voluntary and community work. This overseeing of other family members' household tasks adds to the temporal restrictions of many women.

It is fair to say that a great many of the married women, from all the groups, praised the men in their lives (and in the community) for helping out with their community projects. However, the men appear to have a different relationship with the community/projects than the women did – with the men mostly taking on specific tasks when and if asked: delivering stage props or transporting goods to the Christmas shop, or occasionally taking on the role of child care and housework ('helping out' as it was described), and occasionally taking a turn in the WFI shop.

I was present as a participant observer in the WFI shop one December afternoon while two of the men from the local YES group⁵ volunteered in the shop, and noticed that while they 'assisted' customers in the shop, they didn't do the little extra chores that the female volunteers did; organise the shelves, tidy up, or vacuum the floor.

Alison, one of the volunteers at Rape Crisis, also spoke of noticing a difference within men in her community in relation to helping out or volunteering their time.

'I work in [town] and it's becoming that a lot of men are bringing their children to nursery. A lot of men are not working, you know,

⁵ YES groups are part of the Scottish Independence Movement, and while being political, they are often cross-party in nature

so there's actually been quite a lot of these father and child play things starting up because there are so many men at home with children now. I don't think they're that popular [the father/child play projects], but we are definitely noticing that about men. But I think men that volunteer in the nursery, want to volunteer for the 'I will paint your whatever outside' or 'I'll fix that for you'. They're quite happy to come in and do these sort of things but don't ask them to come in and read a story' (Alison (RC)_Interview, 2.9.2015)

Alison proceeded to talk about differences of men and women in community engagement. Alison's observations were that while men are often noticed for 'big and noticeable' things, it is often women who keep those things going, 'in a quieter way', and 'often completely unnoticed' (interview: 17.9.2015). Describing the different roles men and women played in her community, Alison is highlighting a gendered character of community, the forces at work in the 'we-I balance', and the bases of people's commitment.

Millie spoke of a similar observation during her interview. Her mother was a member of a local boating club, and each member is required (as part of the membership agreement) to cook for the other members on a scheduled basis. Millie told me that when it is the male members' turn, they get their wives in to cook for the other members. However, when it is her mother's turn, she has to do the cooking herself.

'So, every Friday, everyone goes out sailing and they bring up all the kids and someone cooks a bunch of food so when everyone gets in they have food, and you have to volunteer to do two slots. A lot of the members of the yacht club are male, and I have never seen a man behind that hatch. You have to sign up to do two of these shifts to be eligible as a member. It's a duty that is expected of you, but even if you're not a member of the club who is sailing, like other

women, it's your job to come in and do your husband's shift. It's the husbands and the sons that sail, but, it's only ever women behind the service hatch which is odd!' (Millie (RC)_Interview, 4.9.2015)

Dempsey's study of 'Smalltown' in Australia shows a similar perspective on how women and men interact in community contexts. The pattern of gendered involvement in community activity that he uncovered was underpinned by 'important gender-based mores' (1990. p277). These were so deep-seated that neither women nor men regarded the unequal outcomes as 'exploitation'; rather, women were 'accomplices in the inferiorization processes which help maintain men's superordination'. Men hold more formal positions in community organizations, but women take responsibility for most behind-the-scenes tasks inherent in local social life, as observed by Alison in this study, socialised into doing so by 'a lifetime experience of caring for, and deferring to, men'. (Dempsey, 1992, pp.86, 63, 62).

It wasn't unusual to hear the participants in the study praise their husbands and families for 'helping out' in a way that allowed them to participate in their voluntary roles. However, this 'helping out' appeared to occur either through disruption to the family circumstances, or because the women had taken on external commitments. Despite how embedded routine is in our lives, it was interesting to note that for some of the women, it only became apparent when their routine became disrupted. Paradoxically, perhaps it is apparent only when routines are disrupted, *because* those routines *are* so embedded.

Gracie and Clair are mother and daughter. Gracie, retired, has been a line-dance teacher on a voluntary/amateur basis, and has volunteered in other ways in the community where she was raised - both for over twenty-five years. However, two years previously, her daughter had become very ill and had been in hospital for a very long period of time. Gracie had to (temporarily) take over the care of Clair's children while Clair's husband

worked. Gracie still managed to keep up with most of her voluntary activities within the local community centre, especially, the dance classes and pantomimes most years. However, her home routine changed and her (retired) husband has taken over almost all domestic roles in their home.

‘I could never do what I do without my husband. The easiest way to explain it is that I live in a hotel. [Husband] does everything, in particular when I was almost staying with Clair, I was with her [for the] biggest part of day. [Husband] does everything, housework, cooking, shopping and basically treats me like a queen. It helps me help Clair, and what I do in here [community centre]’.

‘He’s actually discovered that he loves cooking, and he’s a very good cook. He never cooked before – I did everything before, but now the roles have changed’ (Gracie (TR)_ Interview: 12/2/2016).

Kara, a WFI and community activist also spoke of her husband doing a lot of the child care and cooking at home, which allowed her to participate in an increasing amount of community work. Kara told me that he was a wonderful cook. During our interview at her home, where I was offered to share in (home-made) soup, bread, and scones, Kara explained that her husband had cooked everything (apart from the home-made jam which her mother had made).

‘My husband helps out all the time, and he does almost all of the cooking. He’s a wonderful cook – I’m really spoiled. He’s quite active online with the independence issue, so he understands how important it is for me’ (Interview: Dec, 2015)

Kara went on to describe her role as an activist as increasing since the Scottish Independence referendum, alongside her sister and mother, who have been life-long supporters of Scottish independence and very active in the local community. Kara is self-employed, and able to fit in her work around her commitments to the organisation she is involved with and her family. Both her activism and paid work often revolve around her computer at home – which is positioned within a dining space between her kitchen and other living areas – allowing her to keep an eye on family activities while she works at her desk. Both her paid and activist roles involve some travelling to various places, and Kara mentioned that it is at these times that her husband looks after the children.

Katherine, a member of the dance group, and cast member of the pantomime, also spoke of her husband ‘helping out’ – not only in their home, but also with the care of her elderly father – which allowed her time to participate with her community activities.

‘My husband has been great. Since I started doing this, he'll make the dinner, he'll make a pot of soup and he'll take it up to my dad...and I am out there for three or four hours myself going “yippee!” Otherwise I'd just be sitting not going anywhere. So it's also gave him something to do as well. He's started doing wee things as well. I can go out there thinking it's Ok, ‘that's in hand’. Before I would have been thinking “I need to do....”. When I come in from rehearsal [husband] will go “what am I doing today?” and I will say what part he has to play, so we sit and go over my lines... and he says “I'll be in the panto next year”. Normally, before this, he would just sit there reading his paper and doing his crossword’. (Interview: 2.11.2015).

Beth, a retired woman who routinely looked after two sets of grandchildren (on the same days) related helping out her family to being like a full time job: getting up at 6am and

travelling to the place where she would spend the day caring for her two sets of grandchildren, before travelling home again.

'I'm knackered by the time I get home. It's like a full shift Tues and Wednesday' (Beth (TR)_interview 22.10.15).

While Beth was relaying this information, she was keen to inform me that, although she drove, it was her husband who drove her to her son's and daughter's homes, and picked her up again at the end of the day. She added that he would help out with the children, sometimes picking up the children at lunchtime 'for her'. Beth's routine, between three households living over fifteen miles apart, had to be carefully planned and organised to allow her to care for the grandchildren. Later in this conversation Beth spoke of difficulties encountered due to road works which prevented her from walking the usual path between the homes where her grandchildren lived.

'I'm actually at my son's house at 7am and I walk from his house to my daughter's house. They've shut the road because they're sorting the bridge, so I've got about an extra half a mile to walk., so it's taking me longer to walk' (Interview: 22.10.2015)

Changes in family and gender roles - women going out to work and a more equal sharing of housework and childcare between partners, are not solely a result in societal changes. For some members, these changes have been forced upon them through ill health and/or family crisis. Gracie's husband's role in the home had to change when their daughter became sick, and Gracie had to help care for her and her grandchildren, however, her

daughter also found that certain roles in her own home also changed when she returned home from hospital.

‘My husband’s role has changed and I wonder what the effect will be on my children as they grow up.... However, I think it’s good for them to see their dad doing more about the house’ (Clair (TR)_Interview, 12.2.2016)

Clair felt it was positive for her daughters to see their father perform a more equal share of the roles at home that would often be considered feminine. Despite almost all of the women speaking highly of their husbands and partners, and how they helped out at home, the descriptions of ‘helping out’ continued to place the responsibility of domestic chores and child care with the women.

9.2 Involving children in the projects

It was important for some of the women in the study to not only include their children and grandchildren in their activities, but to organise activities around improving communities for them. This could be said for all of the groups: within Rape Crisis, their aims and objectives are not solely based around support and advocacy, but also around making safer societies in which to live, and conducting preventative work in schools, youth clubs and organisations, in addition to helping to develop and deliver political policy that enshrines changes within law. Women for Independence at a national level could be seen to be doing similar work with their Justice and Media Watch Campaigns (Mellon, 2016, 2017; WFI, 2015b). However, within their local community groups, some of their various campaigns have children positioned as a central focal point. The Christmas shop project began by supporting families at Christmas and involved local

children, including their own children, by asking them to donate toys and clothes, and having the children come into the shop. Other campaigns, like their family-friendly political hustings, were based upon trying to organise family-friendly spaces where women could access information with their children.

‘That was part of our thinking, “What are we good at?” Well, we know about mums and toddlers, so that was the angle. We changed the vibe of the hustings to much more community-based, and gave it a soft but positive vibe. We made it accessible where people could go while their children played nearby’
(Kara_Interview_23.10.2015)

The pantomime, while perhaps starting off as a bit of light-hearted entertainment for the wider members of the dance group, has grown to include the members’ children and grandchildren as part of the performance, Christmas party, and this particular year, they also organised a premiere viewing of the recorded dvd production for the cast and their families.

However, not all of the women in the study spoke quite so favourably about doing things for their children. Alison is a single parent, working two jobs. Her two children were mid to late teens, one of whom lived at home with her full-time. Her other child lives with her at weekends and over the holidays. She spoke of making a mistake when they were younger by ‘doing everything for them’, and now, as older teenagers, she found herself still having to do most of the household chores herself.

‘I come in from working all day at [both places of work], and he hasn’t even made himself anything to eat. Getting him to do

anything (her own emphasis) in the home has been more or less impossible. (Alison (RC)_Interview, 2.9.2015)

Involving children in the projects draws attention to the role that women play as carers, not only in the home, but also in the community. It also highlights the requirement of women to participate in work and activities near to the home, and even their mothers – an observation found within Elias and Scotson's (1994) study. Crow suggests that family and kin living locally often find themselves to be bound together by shared experiences or 'ways of life' in which familiar institutions are reinforced by customs and established local practices (2002, p.75). It is also apparent how often personal interests are continued through family generations. The dance group organiser Gracie is a trained line-dance instructor and it appears that her granddaughter will soon be partaking in training events to lead her on the same pathway. Kara and her sister spoke of learning community activism, and support for Scottish independence from their mother, and spoke about their working/family/community activist lives as completely interlinked with one another - and I will discuss this further in the following section.

9.3 Negotiation within families and wider networks

It wasn't only immediate family members who impacted on the time of the women in the study. Elias's attention to the interdependencies between members of communities highlight the necessary connectedness between both the 'I' and 'we' (1991, Pt III) and 'we' and 'they' (1978, p.130). In the previous chapter, we saw how the members of the dance group rallied around Clair and her children to help when Clair's mother was out of town. During their interview, sisters Beth and Bella were discussing the reciprocity of kindness in communities - and the ways in which friends and family learn to help others.

‘[W]hen you see somebody doing something for you, and you think “well they don’t need my help, but I can do that for somebody else” because it’s been done for you. I think it just makes you a better person because you’ve seen it. But see people who don’t get anything nice done to them, then they don’t know how to give back. You have to have been shown that kind of love and that kind of thing in your upbringing to be able to do it’. (Bella (TR)_22.10.2015)

Similarly, the WFI group were seen to help each other out with respective projects each member was involved with. During fieldwork, a few of the local group members were travelling to a national conference. I had mentioned also attending, and two of the members who were travelling together offered to take me along with them. More recently, members of the group who were involved in the ‘Keep Scotland Brand’ agreed to forgo using the WFI label at a local information awareness day in an effort to also attract those who were opposed to Independence. This gesture was offered to group as beneficial to the wider aspects of the Scottish economy, and while not everyone felt comfortable with this, restraint was shown by those opposing, respecting the majority.

As mentioned previously in this chapter, earlier studies have discussed the primary role that women play in taking care of and keeping in touch with family members, and we can see this repeated throughout the decades. While in earlier decades, women’s role in communities may have been more understandable because women did not undertake paid work as much as they do now, women who do paid work continue to be the main connector between family members, carers of external family members while also playing a role in community activity. However, there are times, during family emergencies, where women’s voluntary or leisure activities are sacrificed.

Similar to Emilia, mentioned previously as having to give up her volunteer role at Rape Crisis to look after her mother, Morag (WFI) had to take a ‘step back’ from her activist

role in the community to look after her husband. Katherine (TR) who cared for her father (above p.186) later, at the period of my writing this thesis, had to cut back further on her leisure and voluntary activities to care for her husband who had also become seriously ill. This 'hard-to-control temporal nature of care' (Davies, 1990, p.106) is often at odds with other interests of the women in the study – and again echoes Elias's we-I balance being tilted towards the we. Roberts's oral history of working-class women in the fifty years from 1890 describes 'women who were disciplined, inhibited, conforming and who placed perceived familial and social needs before those of the individual' (Roberts, 1984). Hochschild, more recently, treats being 'overly concerned with the needs of others' as a gendered phenomenon, something producing in women an unhealthy 'false self' (1983, pp.195-6) in which altruism and commitment to the good of others is excessive.

9.4 Paid employment

For those women who combine paid work and volunteering, fitting voluntary work around paid work life can be difficult, however, employers are increasingly-sympathetic to employees who volunteer (NHS Scotland, 2010; Scottish Government, 2006; Volunteer Now, 2016). Changes in relation to home life and child care also play a role here, and while many women are now in paid work (which could impact on women's ability to access community activities), we also see an increasing number of employers and businesses who allow for flexi-time working, or home working arrangement for employees. Government aid and support with child care could also be said to improve women's access into voluntary roles.

However, not all employers are sympathetic to workers' needs. Niamh worked in a relatively high position for a well-known media company. She spoke of often having to work between 12- 19 hours a day, and often on short term contracts – resulting in her

rarely knowing from one month to the next whether her employment would continue. This made her volunteering somewhat erratic, and impacted on how useful she felt as a volunteer.

'The job I am in now, I have said that I need to get away early on Tuesdays, and so far they've been pretty good. However, I work twelve and sometimes nineteen hours in a day...I'm utterly exhausted. I would like to be here [RC] more regularly, cos I don't even make it once a week.' (Niamh_Interview 3.8.2015)

Niamh did however describe a 'fluke' in her working hours, which allowed her to join RC and embark on the training that she had been hoping to do for over a year.

'I'd seen that they (RC) were looking for volunteers and that they did the training, and I've always wanted to work with women anyway. I'd actually applied the year before and just missed the deadline so they said they would keep me on a list, and so they contacted me the next year and I was away in [abroad] working at a children's hospital and then I was back in the January and it just worked out perfectly. I was working on [TV programme], but with that programme I have to go away every other weekend, and it was just a pure fluke that the training was every other Sunday and it was on the week that I wasn't away. So it just kind of felt like 'oh, this is perfect' (Niamh_Interview, 27.7.2015).

Niamh also said that it was her volunteering role that gave her a feeling of security, where her job did not. Her own job was 'fast-paced' with regard to working hours and quite erratic due to lack of a permanent contract, which left her feeling that she didn't have a strong foundation to build upon. In contrast, her volunteering felt solid. Her six

months training was something she could progress from and develop. It was a constant in her life whereas she had multiple different jobs and contracts in her paid employment.

Later, in this interview, while I was asking Niamh about the difficulties trying to fit her volunteering work around her paid employment, I became aware that she was really anxious. At this point I moved the conversation onto another topic. I had written the following in my fieldnotes.

I notice that Niamh is really quite stressed and anxious this evening. She tells me that she has been working really hard. Her work contract is for two to four weeks at a time and she hasn't had a holiday for years. At one point she looked on the verge of tears while talking about how stressful her work is. She adds that coming to the centre is what makes her happy – it's time that allows her to slow down – she feels a real connection with the centre – more so than with her job (RC_Fieldnotes_3.8.2015).

Niamh later explained that had been invited to an interview for a paid position in a similar women's organisation. She had been working at her paid job (the usual twelve-nineteen hours daily) and had had little time to prepare for the interview which included her writing a fifteen-minute presentation. Niamh told me she really wanted the job, but had found it impossible to find time to prepare for the interview and was feeling 'really stressed out'.

'I don't know how they expect people to write a presentation for a job interview while working full-time. They are supposed to be supportive of women – but I just feel really anxious and under pressure'.

However, the staff at the RC centre had been very active in offering support to Niamh to help her with the presentation, setting time aside from their own duties to assist her in developing her presentation. It is clear from Niamh's interview, and from other conversations with volunteers in the study, that they get something positive for themselves from their relationships with the organisations and from their voluntary activities. It isn't just the causes, it is often the stability and sense of routine that volunteering brings to their lives.

Like Niamh, Alison similarly had had some difficulties working long hours. As a single parent, she worked two paid part-time jobs, but had previously taken on some extra paid work at Rape Crisis on a 'call-out' contract. This contract, however, meant often being called out during the night, and spending time supporting survivors during police questioning – and then having to go to her main place of employment the following day.

'I felt I was drowning and I didn't have time. I was coping with it because I was financially better off than I had ever been, however, I felt like it was something that I couldn't sustain. I couldn't keep that up, so the thing I feel about time at the moment is that I am managing it. I'm just at [main job] two days now, that's been good because I've got all day (free) on the Wednesday and I'm on the helpline (volunteering) at night.' (Alison (RC)_Interview, 15.10.2015)

Being financially 'better off', can often leave the individual 'time poor' (McGinnity and Russell, 2007; Pahl, 1988) often resulting in feelings of guilt for not being able to spend enough time with family and friends - something I will pick up on in the following chapter. Time-poor also reflects on women's ability to commit to particular activities (leisure,

voluntary work). While WFI make efforts not to make distinctions between women's commitment to the cause (by not insisting on punctuality or regular attendance), commitment to roles and groups does play a crucial part in negotiations of power – which I discussed in the previous chapter, but also in the ways in which some members viewed their time spent (being active) over the ways in which they viewed other people's time.

Rhona, who was self-employed, appeared to combine all her paid and unpaid activities together when she spoke about working 'seven days a week'. I was aware of how much time Rhona spent on her community and WFI activities, and if she were working in paid employment for all these hours, she couldn't possibly have time to fit in her activist work. Rhona later spoke about finding difficulty separating types of work (paid and unpaid) – or finding a 'work/life balance'. She described this multiplicity of time and labour as "It's all me".

'You see folk whose lifestyle revolves around doing jobs in the morning, going out in the afternoon and then have tea and then watch television and I think "How bizarre". My routine is; mornings I am working, afternoon I am working, and evenings I am usually working - seven days a week. There is rarely a day when I don't work. Every day is just, "what do I need to do today?" It doesn't matter what day of week or hour of the day; I just think "what is the next thing I have to do?"' (Rhona (WFI)_Interview, 23.10.2015)

Greenhouse draws attention to 'bracket[ing] off the personal experience of time from symbols of social time' and imagining the 'temporality of personal experience as somehow the binary "other" of official time'. Greenhouse highlights these complexities of time and the 'messiness' that 'find channels of expression in social life: religious affiliation, political association, self-identity, and personal attachments of other kinds' (2014, pp.143, 144) and argues that personal time sits in conjunction/association with

other time. Wajcman (2016) also draws attention to the use of digital technologies and a blurring of work/life boundaries. This 'messiness' of time was regularly discussed during the study with women often talking about being unable to split their activities into different time frames. Paid employment (away from the home) often makes this easier. One knows what time one starts and finishes and so has a clear understanding of what counts as worktime. However – (as I will discuss further in chapter 11), digital technologies contribute to the ways in which our working lives spill over into our personal time - by the ways in which we are always contactable by others. Where previously (pre email/digital technology) a worker may have had some power and even control over their working hours- knowing that when they 'clocked off', they were free from work, today's worker is often always contactable by their employer, so in a way, paid employment is never far from one's mind.

Rhona struggled to separate her work/life balance – though not solely for the reasons of having little agency. It was her belief that paid employment should be closely related to one's personal life, and that the two were not separate, and should 'dovetail' with each other.

'I don't believe in work/life balance - it's all life... it's all your life. Your work and your life outside of it have to match, they're not two separate things, it's all me! I don't have two separate personas so they have to dovetail with each other somehow... It's more difficult these days, in terms of what I do for work, I do have maintain some separation between them.' (Rhona (WFI)_23.10. 2015)

Rhona's reason for keeping her current work-life separate from her activism was due to her political activist activity, and her job, which involved her being present in people's lives during very difficult periods. Her political activity could be seen to cause upset to some clients given the current political climate in Scotland, and so politics were kept

distinctly separate from her work. This seems to sit in tension with her views of not believing in separating working and personal life.

Hochschild's 'The Time Bind' (1997) discusses the feel good factor that many professional workers experience from their paid employment – something that was reported as lacking in the home life of workers at the Amerco company in her study. However, for some of the women in this study, as with Niamh, Alison and Millie, the feel good factor was often specifically derived from their community and voluntary work - some even drawing a distinction between the values of paid and unpaid (voluntary) work.

Millie spoke about both her voluntary work at RC and her hopes of working within education as equally important to her. Millie was preparing to graduate from university and said that her career aims were to work within education. However, her voluntary work at Rape Crisis was of great importance to her – so much so, that she didn't want to make it a career. She felt that if it was something she did every day, full-time, she feared she would eventually become immune to the needs of the service users, and wasn't something she ever wanted to do (full-time) 'for money'.

'There is some theory around if you get paid for doing something that you love that you actually lose the kind of love for it, it somehow loses its value because it becomes your paid employment and you have to be there, whereas if you are doing something voluntary out of your own time, you are there because you have a desire to be there - you want to be there - so it has greater meaning for you.' (Millie (RC)_Interview 4.9.2015)

The feel good factor of her voluntary role was partly in relation to doing it for free, and with the choice of being there or not, at times suitable to her. For Millie, there was a real sense of legitimacy and power within choosing to do her voluntary support work 'for

free'. It legitimised, for her, the value of what she was doing - because she was doing it simply because she wanted to. There was a value to the time spent volunteering that was separate to the financial value of time spent in paid employment.

Emilia, worked flexi-time and could get away from her work early to make it to the RC centre in time for her shift each week, and then make the time up later in the week in her paid employment. In addition to this, her mother (during the period of this fieldwork) looked after her children between school time, and Emilia (or her husband), picked the children up when they finished work. Her mother not only looked after her children, but provided them with dinner, which Emilia found really helpful after a long day at work followed by her shift on the helpline.

'The wee man is at after-school, so my husband will go down, get him, get my daughter and drop them at his, or my mum's, and I will pick them up when I finish here. It works well for me, cos it means I don't have to go home and cook dinner and wash dishes - she's had them fed for me by the time I get there'. (Emilia (RC)_18.7.2015)

Marjorie had retired from a professional full-time job she had worked in for most of her adult life. She spoke about having 'little' time for her children when they were younger, working hard – at her paid job, and in the home. She recalled always rushing around during the years she worked when her children were at home. She also spoke of feeling an unhealthy responsibility to have a clean and tidy home. This resulted in her getting up at 6am and cleaning before going to work – and reflecting now, of perhaps spending too much time on these activities. As a grandparent, she feels more appreciative of time spent playing with her granddaughter – and time spent volunteering with the group she is involved with.

‘Trying to be superwoman...But I think possibly the kids were, not neglected but because I was that busy cleaning, instead of playing with them, whereas now, I’d rather play’. (Marjorie (WFI)_Interview: 16.12.2015)

Since her (early) retirement Marjorie told me that she has taken time to ‘slow down’, and to take care of herself. Marjorie also said that now that she had retired from her full-time position, she was more able to find time for other people, and other interests in her life.

‘Things are not quite as cut and dried as they used to be, now I can work around things. When the children were younger, I fitted my time around their day and my work’.

Whereas some of the other women who worked in paid employment spoke about hectic time schedules, Marjorie had made a decision to change the work schedule she had. She had retired from her professional position and retrained within massage therapy - and chose when she wanted to work. She spoke of the differences she had found, in that where previously she had been somewhat financially better off but time poor, she was now (more) ‘time rich’, but financially less well off - and appreciating the benefits that have come from making this decision. Marjorie’s choice to cut back her working hours, and shifting from a stressful well-paid job, to one which she felt was more beneficial to her well-being, was also in part to allow her to have more choices over her time. This allowed her to participate in volunteering and activist-related activities that were important to her. When faced with a choice where her well-paid work squeezed everything else out, she chose the other things, even though she was financially less well-off.

9.5 Routines and rhythms – making the ‘taken for granted’ visible

It is clear from these previous sections which discuss the family and working lives of women that routine is part and parcel of daily life, however when asked about routine, some members of groups spoke of ‘not having a routine’ – which raises some awareness of the hidden aspect of routines and rhythms in our lives – and how routines of sleeping, waking, eating, dressing, washing, which are crucial to the organisation of daily life, often go unnoticed within our daily activities. Zerubavel (1981) discusses the hidden aspects of the familiar in social life, and similarly, many of the women in the study, when asked about routines, completely overlooked the everyday (routinized) aspect of eating, sleeping, waking - and gave immediate thought of routine to that of housework, chores or other activities that they planned on a regular basis.

Everyday life often means the daily continuum of the mundane activities, and which are often strongly identified with women because they are linked with repetition and routine (Lefebvre, 2002, 1987). However, what we often refer to as ‘everyday life’ is somewhat unique to each individual. We each have small routines and rituals quite distinctive from one another. Some people shower in the morning, others, at night; some luxuriate weekly in bubbly baths, or lather their skin with creams in a ritualistic fashion. Some women routinely apply their make-up with precision each morning, while another might dash outside each morning with the dog having hardly washed their face (only doing so when they return from the morning dog walk).

Routines help us organise our lives, and might be even be described as keeping us safe – the familiar helping to provide comfort in knowing what is happening, or about to happen next. My own experiences of supporting adults with disabilities heightened my own awareness to the importance of learning each supported person’s daily routine as a way of allowing them choice and control of their lives, but also as a means of providing familiarity and comfort to them. However, stress factors associated with the everyday

are also caused by its repetitive character, in addition to the boredom factor of mundane daily chores. The repetitive nature of these daily tasks can also however mean that they feel never-ending.

The never-ending thankless housework
Emails, phone-calls
Work. Work. Work. Work
(lines from poetry workshop, 2015)

Elizabeth Silva (2002) refers to Dorothy Smith (1987) who was concerned with everyday stresses and argues that the mundane (or routine) is a major site of innovation and practices that challenge established patterns of living. She suggests that concern with the everyday has meant giving attention to experiences of ordinary women, men and children – and arguing for an understanding of the embedded-ness of everyday life in wider social, economic contexts. For Lefebvre, the repetition of the everyday is a riddle as it is fundamentally at odds with the modern drive toward progress - a contradiction between linear and cyclical time.

‘In the study of the everyday we discover the great problem of repetition, one of the most difficult problems facing us’ (Lefebvre, 1987, p.10)

There are of course questions around routine of the everyday that tell us a great deal more about how routines shape, and are shaped by everyday life: the location in which they are placed, and how this might impact on a person’s ability to engage with their community, or make ‘selfish’ choices for themselves: routines and activities that need to be co-ordinated with other people at the same time, so much so, that synchronisation might be seen as a challenge – but that happens despite the many ways in which this can go wrong.

Discussing routines with participants often drew in conversations around busyness and order with the older women in the groups. Many spoke of attending their groups as a way to get out of the house – or for company. Davies describes time as ‘losing its contours with the dissolution of paid work (1990, p.128) and the same might be said for those in retirement, or physically unable to work. For some members, their weekly attendance was a way of structuring their lives, which was especially important since giving up work.

‘...this is our routine, coming here. We have our routine every week and Wednesdays and Fridays is for coming here. We’re here every week. We make sure of that, no matter what we’re doing.’ (Bella, Interview with Beth and Bella (TR)_22.10.2015)

Time can seem on occasion to pass too quickly, or too slowly, depending on our day-to-day activities. Ageing can also cause time to appear to pass more quickly - or perhaps more slowly if one is sitting alone all day, every day. We may understand units of time as constant, however, our experiences of the passing of time changes according to many different factors (mood, health, activity). Many of the older, retired women spoke about routinely shopping with friends and meeting up for lunch. For others in the study, the idea of routine was embedded in family life: housework, children and grandchildren.

‘Pretty much through the week I try to get things done in the morning... I don’t know if it’s a routine but, aye, I try and make sure everything is done before I go out to work in the morning. Washing on, get the place swept out before I leave for work...’ (Emilia (RC)_Interview 12.7.2015)

Other areas of Emilia's routine were embedded weekly rituals of visiting family members or shopping. Her daily routine of housework had been put on hold because her dog had been ill and required a great deal of care.

'I often visit my mother or mother-in-law on a Saturday and Sunday... doing shopping - spend time with them, or get some housework done. The dog hasn't been well and so everything got put on hold.... everything in the house is an absolute riot just now....' (Emilia (RC)_Interview 12.7.2015)

Millie, one of the more regular Rape Crisis volunteers, was one of the few participants who filled in a diary during the study – and included drawings and diagrams (Figures 7 and 8).

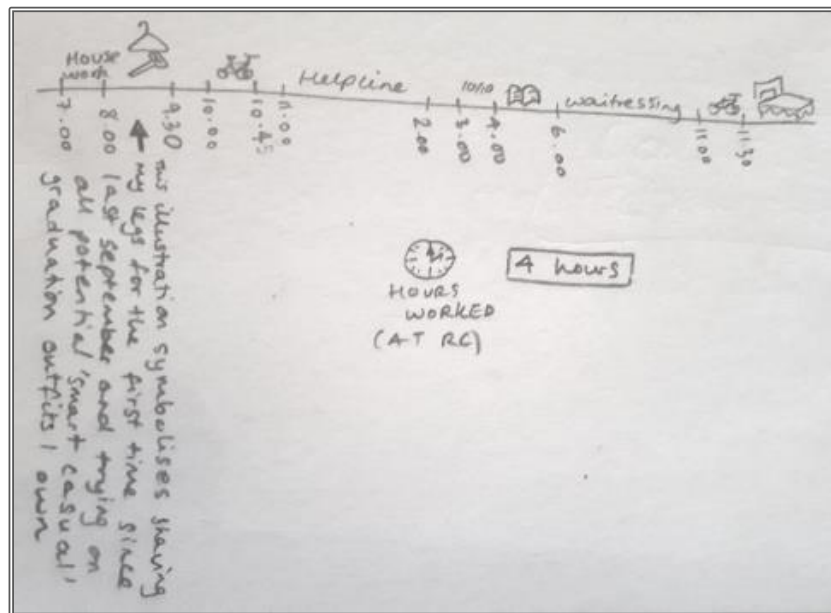


Figure 7: Extract from Diary 1:20.8.2015

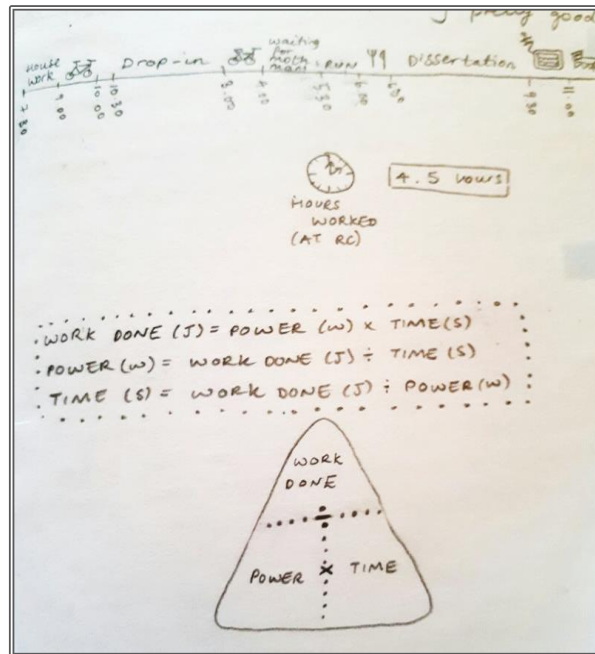


Figure 8: Extract from Diary 1: 5.8.2015

Millie mentioned finding enjoyment using the diary as a means of helping her understand the temporalities of her busy life by putting into context just how much she was doing – and what qualified as ‘work’. You can see the example of this in the diagram she has created (above), where she is attempting to put into context the work/energy/time in a day, and while she has compartmentalised her daily activities (in top image), there were times during our conversations when she spoke activities that overlapped into one another.

9.5.1 Synchronising

In order for there to be routine involving two or more parties, there also has to be some synchronization. Elias (1992) argues that time is a construction that people create and learn through symbols that arise out of a need for synchronized activity within the interconnectedness between individuals within societies. Daly (2002) discusses the temporal dimensions of pace, turn-taking, interpretation of past, and future events that are required for synchronised interaction. McNeill (1995), similarly, draws attention to the practical objects that highlight not how little synchronisation there is, but how much – given the enormous scope that exists for people to be out of step (Crow and Heath 2002, p.3).

Beth had recently reduced her working hours, following a government decision to raise women's retirement age. Thinking that she was soon to retire, she cut her hours to a level that was sustainable for longer than she had originally intended to work. She has also moved closer to her job, and discusses her daily routine during our interview.

'It's pure routine, every morning. Just now it is a bit of a different routine, but I still know how long it takes me to get to work. Now it's half the time, it's only five minutes up the road to my new work. I still know when I go in in the morning, the lassies will have the kettle on. I will have a cup of tea, sit and have my tea before I go (start), but I'm only in about twenty minutes and that's them having their break. So I don't have a breakfast before and I make that my breakfast. I've got it set...boom, boom, boom. Out the door' (Beth (TR)_Interview with Beth and Bella, 22.10.2015)

The weekly rehearsals of the pantomime group made visible the synchronising discussed here. The routine of attending each week, or twice weekly, as the performance drew

near. The repetitive speaking of the lines, and actions of one performer in synchronisation with the other cast members. In addition to this was the acknowledgment of what scene had taken place, and what future scene was about to unfold. The timing of each actor, individually requiring a space on the stage. The turn taking of their speaking parts, the music - and then, within the performance, the interaction with the audience.

There are so many opportunities for things to be 'out of sync' within the performance of our everyday lives (as McNeill (1995) argues), however, we are more in-sync with one another than we often realise. This is often noticeable when driving: we are required to have an awareness of all the other drivers on the road, and we require traffic lights to work in sync with one another, so that we can all move safely around one another. However, there are often other, much subtler, forms of synchronising between 'actors' in public spaces - and I have become much more aware of this since beginning this study. What I am talking about here is the ways in which our bodies move together in public spaces; weaving and dodging each other with ease – and really only noticeable during those jarring moments when we either collide with someone, or more embarrassingly, repeatedly dodge out of each other's way in the same direction, and end up doing the 'pavement dance' together.

Routine of course is not simply about repetitive patterns of behaviour or actions, it can also be understood as rhythm and as my observations of daily patterns increased, I became aware of the rhythm and repetitive nature of conversation: the ways in which we are constantly moving back and forth in discussion. One person speaks, another listens, then they swap – and so on. I observed two of the groups – (WFI and the dance/pantomime group), as they gathered together to formulate new ideas, develop projects and write scripts. This type of conversational negotiation was of course also evident with the women on the helpline as they listened and responded to the callers), but this 'keeping together in time' (McNeill, 1995) was also evident more informally.

The women around the table are laughing, their shoulders shaking in time as they laugh, stopping and starting again (in time) with their scripts and conversation (Panto group rehearsal: fieldnotes_Nov 2015)

On another occasion, at the WFI National Convention, the audience were invited to speak. Despite the women coming from all walks of life, some never having spoken in public before, some quiet, some very vocal - all (who spoke) were able, without guidance to take turns, and without interruption from others, to speak.

The microphone was passed around the room, each woman paying attention, and giving time to each of the other women who want to speak. Each woman who stands up from her table to speak is given a round of applause on finishing, and then the microphone is passed onto the next - some responding to the previous speaker, others simply having their own thoughts that they want to share (Fieldnotes: WFI AGM_19.11. 2016).

For the pantomime/dance group especially, this repetition and synchronisation is crucial to their performance. Repeating the same lines and steps over and over until skilled – a ‘repetition [that] promotes learning, and [where] the past is embedded in the present’ (Wolin and Bennett, 1984. p404).

The script is really developing now; being shaped each time by the conversations and suggestions from the women in the group. As they practice their lines, repeating the words and actions over and again, they not only learn the words of the script, they appear to be able to visualise the performance as a whole – ‘what works’ and

‘what doesn’t’. The timing of each act becomes clearer with each repeated performance. As they sit around the table afterwards they take turns listening to suggestions put forward about their performance, or small changes that could be made – and then they respond. Each rehearsal picks up from the previous week, recalling what has happened, and bringing forth new ideas from the previous to build upon. (Fieldnotes_ 5.11.2015).

However, rehearsals weren’t always ‘in synch’, and as the performance date drew closer, areas of the script not working so well became more obvious as the various ‘scenes’ were rehearsed concurrently.

‘Practice doesn’t seem to be coming along well – too many changes’

‘Dress rehearsal today – what chaos! No organisation at all.’

(Diary 4: Entries_Nov 7th, 29th)

Nevertheless, for some of the dance group, a poor dress rehearsal was a good sign and diary entries and conversations around this were situated on this premise.

‘Dress rehearsal. Didn’t go well which means we should have a good first night. Finger’s crossed. (Diary 3: Entry_29.11.2015)

Routines, for some, can be restrictive and constraining. Marjorie spoke of being obsessed with housework when she was younger, but as an older woman she had become much more relaxed about routines.

‘My mother was a cleaning fanatic. I was... I’m not as bad. I still like a tidy house but it got to the stage that even if it had been done, and I had been cleaning all day, if the kids came in and crushed a cushion, I would go off my head. I thought to myself ‘get a grip here....’ So now I am a lot more relaxed and the floor can be with

[muddy] footprints and it's not a big deal.' (Marjorie (WFI)_Interview: 16.12.2015)

Marjorie also went on to say that it was a traumatic experience that made her rethink her attitude toward routines and housework, and what was 'important in life'.

9.6 Chapter Summary

As we can see the negotiations discussed in this chapter emerge through each woman's interactions with other people in their lives, and their behaviour is not simply a product of following a set of pre-ordained social rules, or by the position they occupy in social life. While some of their positions are a requirement of the world in which they live, their negotiations allow some room for manoeuvre – although as highlighted by Finch and Mason 'it is never entirely open-ended and sometimes it can be quite constrained' (1993, p.60). While in earlier decades, women's role in communities may have been more understandable because women did not undertake paid work quite as much as they do now, women who do paid work, continue to be the main connector between family members, carers of external family member while also playing a role in community activity. However, there are times, during family emergencies, where women's voluntary or leisure activities are sacrificed. We can also see here that relationships here involve 'power differentials' (Elias, 1974, p.xx) that fall unequally on women.

This chapter has explored the ways in which women facilitate and service the activities of others in their lives, particularly their immediate family members. It illustrates how domestic labour and childcare done by women provides the space for others to participate in other activities, contributing directly to their interests and well-being. However, it also offers evidence to how domestic labour and childcare done by men provides space for the women to participate in other activities, albeit the men had to be

asked by the women to do these things. Davies (1990) highlights the ways in which private and public time for a care giver can overlap and flow into one another by putting the care receiver's interests first. The women in this study showed similar experiences displaying understanding, empathy, flexibility, and caring and putting the other people in their lives in the centre – making other people's life qualitatively better while sacrificing their own. However, it is often difficult to draw a line between personal and social time. For many of the women, we can see how social time of work and volunteering also 'gives routine to the personal' – while also giving something to the individual from the collective (Greenhouse, 2014, pp.3-4). The women can be seen to work out their course of action in reference to other people in their lives, highlighting the interdependencies between them and the networks to which they belong - showing the necessary connectedness between the 'we' and the 'I'.

We've now seen how women can negotiate with organisations about when and how they participate. We have seen how through negotiation, volunteering can be fitted in around domestic, family and work routines. In the next chapter, I will go on to discuss the negotiations one might have with oneself when one is trying to work out 'Do I have time for this?'

10. Have I got time for this?

I am waiting,
Wondering when the time will come
The ticking clock makes visible
The changes that I do not want to see
Waiting
The panic I feel is forced inside
Pretending not to worry
Pushing it down
Time is passing as I cry
And wait
I understand the struggle
And the times when I am silent
But I dream of hope.
And different times coming
I am waiting.
LF, WFI. 2016

Previous chapters have identified how women negotiate with organisations, regarding when and how they participate, and how, through negotiation, their volunteering can be fitted in around family, friends and domestic and work routines. However, as I have discussed briefly within earlier chapters, identity plays a crucial role in how the women in the study are able to negotiate their volunteering within other aspects of their lives. It is in this chapter that I will discuss the struggles volunteers might have finding a balance between the 'I' and 'we' elements of their lives - and what this means in regard to participating in community activity, and as being member of a group.

The concept of the self as inherently social underpins many feminisms: acknowledging the social relationships and social construction of lived knowledge, and human community in creating and understanding both self-identity and the nature of meaning

of the particulars of individual lives (Friedman, 1995). Women may be seen to have conflicting positions within the 'collective'. On one side they often symbolise the collective 'unity' and underpinnings of specific projects. On the other, however, 'they are often excluded from the collective 'we' of the body politic' (Yuval-Davis, cited in Beebeejaun and Grimshaw, 2010, p.3). As touched on in other sections of this thesis, many women's experiences of time, community, and volunteering are often so closely related to their immediate surroundings, that questions about identity and agency are often hard to determine within the moment to moment practices of day-to-day life.

In our current western societies, individual identity is often seen as more important than group identities. The we-I balance has in most recent times shifted toward the 'I' end of the scale, a process captured through the idea of 'individualization'. Although the rights of the individual are important in our understandings of a democratic society – and that it is important that we all have our beliefs and identities recognised – we are also encouraged to work together, to care for and support our each other in our communities, and to act as one whole. Elias tells us that societies and communities are not simply a bunch of individuals coming together to form a group, but instead societies are the relationships between these individuals and that, it is this that forms what we know as society.

The impact of each other's lives on each other and how these groups and interactions impact on each other changes individuals and societies and communities in specific ways – so that it has a history which takes a course which has not been planned, or intended, by any of the individuals making it or considered in isolation (Elias, 2001, pp.10-11)

It remains a challenge to account for the detail of what people do in their community involvement. To the extent we have individual identities, we have to carve them out in the context of social forces that impress upon us our mutual interdependence, and so thinking of volunteers' negotiations in terms of a balance; weighing up things and spreading themselves a bit here and a bit there for the good of the group, or knowing when to speak up or stay silent, helps us to understand better the ways in which group members may prioritise their 'we-identity' over their 'I-identity'.

10.1 Time to call your own

In earlier chapters, I have touched upon the uses of women's time, and the ways in which other people in the lives of women feel some sense of shared ownership of their time. I was curious to know whether, in all the various roles and activities in these women's lives, they thought of any of the time as exclusively 'theirs': how they spent time relaxing, or whether their voluntary work was viewed (by themselves) as a part of their 'own' time. I was also curious about how this balance of time and self was negotiated.

Within all of the previous chapters of time and negotiations, there have been account after account of the hidden work that women do. This is not a new thing, and has been studied by many other researchers. For example, private time may be seen as that taking place inside the home, or in the evening (Zerubavel, 1990), however, as I have discussed, a woman's time inside the home is not always exclusively hers. On many occasions, a woman's time is shared (unequally) with other members of her household. For example, often it is that a mother's sleep may be interrupted by the call of her crying baby or sick child, or a woman might refer to 'doing my ironing', when she is in fact doing the household ironing. So the idea of personal time often turns out to be contested.

On a fine day, if it's windy or sunny, I will find myself looking for washing (laundry) to do. I don't like to miss the chance of hanging the washing outside.

(Margaret; during an informal conversation about family housework and free time).

Davies builds upon this in her study of women in the workplace who have 'no own time' (1990, p.100). Similarly, women who care for their children or grandchildren often speak of not getting to go to the toilet alone. Rape Crisis helpline workers, spoke of 'using the toilet before entering the helpline room', marking a transition between their own time and time when they prioritised their availability to others. Time then, cannot be focused on as individual time, but rather time as relational to significant others.

This 'messiness of time' drew out discussion around the 'internal conversations' (Archer, 2003) we often have with ourselves when deliberating ideas and decisions (and I will discuss this later in this chapter). This was particularly noticeable in conversations around time spent doing things, and feelings of being 'good enough' (Silva, 1996). Many of the women mentioned preferring 'being busy', and finding it difficult to relax or sit quietly. There was often a hint of 'feeling guilty' about 'doing nothing', or taking time to oneself.

'I hate sitting about, I get bored...my mind is always going'
(Gracie (TR)_Interview 12.2.2016)

'That's why I do jobs and voluntary work cos if I'm in the house I
do housework. I just keep doing housework.'
(Emilia (RC)_Interview: 12.7.2015)

The guilt from not keeping up with one's housework is something that women often feel. Marjorie spoke at length about her obsessive housework when her children had been

young, feeling that it was her duty to keep a clean home. Respectability has a history that is often positioned around the behaviours of women, especially working-class women, and Skeggs, (1997) and Lawler, (2008, p.111) comment on how little this has changed over more than a century. Social cultural practices continue to construct the (female) body by controlling bodily conduct and social behaviour, not by means of direct restraint by others but by self-restraint (Elias, 2001; Foucault, 1991; Orbach, 2009). This can be witnessed in not only the way women view their bodies, feeling shame, hatred and even disgust for not fitting into socially accepted norms of femaleness, but also in the uses of their time.

Lilith (TR) was discussing cutting back on some of her volunteering activities, and increasingly taking more time to relax. She was keen to justify cutting back on her previously very busy schedule.

‘Sometimes I just have a wee nap to myself...There’s nae rules and regulations that say you have to be busy all the time’ (Lilith (TR)_Interview, 8.2.2016)

In this comment, Lilith appeared to be ‘making it alright’ with herself - to take a nap in the afternoon, and not to feel guilty about it. Her comment suggests that she is perhaps concerned what others may think, or whether others may think her to be lazy having a nap in the afternoon. Lilith follows it up by stating that there are ‘no rules’ to say that one has to be busy all the time. Prior to making this statement, Lilith had been talking about moving into her current home: a large tower block for elderly residents. She explained that a male friend had commented that she would ‘let herself go’ and ‘age’ by making this move, and Lilith spoke at length about remaining active and busy. She discussed further what it meant to be busy, but also how she felt that she was taking on

too much and had decided to pull back from some of the volunteering she was doing for fear of burning out. While speaking with her, Lilith fetched a letter that she had received from another community group she had volunteered with. The letter was written in response to her resignation, and to let her know how much the group had appreciated the good work she had done, and how she would be missed now that she had resigned from her position. Lilith spoke of the letter writer in high regard, emphasising the author's previous professional working position, and that the content of the letter, and the high praise he had bestowed on her, meant something because of his respected position. She put these things in context with her taking time out to relax now and then, and 'go to bed with a book' on the occasional afternoon.

Marjorie (WFI group,) spoke about how the time she spends doing things she doesn't want to do has decreased for her - whereas spending time with people she wanted to spend time with, and doing things she wants to do has increased since retiring early from her full-time employment. Marjorie had made a conscious effort to do this, and explained that her attitude to time had changed since she experienced the loss of a family member. As we spoke she reflected on the changes in her lifestyle since retiring from her previous full-time job. Marjorie continued to work occasionally, in her new role as a self-care therapist – making her very well placed to reflect on these issues. There was some reflection on her past, and new relationship with time. The following is an excerpt from our interview.

'Time is not such a big deal to me now. Because I can work things in, but the biggest time saver is doing the things you feel you want to do, and not doing for the sake of having to do it...or feeling guilty. Feeling guilty is a big thing for a time waster eh.' (Marjorie (WFI)_16.12.15)

Marjorie's past relationship with time had a great deal to do with how she felt others might view her as a working mother, who might be expected to work (in paid employment), and keep a clean and tidy home. Despite mentioning earlier that her husband helped around the house, it is clear from the conversation that Marjorie also felt it was her duty to ensure the running of the home went smoothly. Her new relationship with time allows her to prioritise spending time with her grandchildren over the housework without feelings of guilt – and the subject of guilt will be discussed in the following section.

Millie, whose diary entries I referred to previously, went into great detail about her time schedule and relationship with time. Millie seemed to be struggling with the puzzle of equating the quantity of hours worked, and the emotional energy used. One entry read:

'I feel pretty low on energy at the moment and I can't work out if I'm shattered or if I've been sat around all day. I'm only doing 7.5 hours at the centre this week and about 10 hours of waitressing, so I don't feel like I'm doing a lot. But an hour at Rape Crisis isn't the same emotionally as an hour of waiting on, and an hour of waiting on isn't physically the same as an hour at Rape Crisis, plus it's an hour round trip by bike to either the centre or my waitressing job and when I'm at home I'm studying or looking after my broken-footed partner who's living here at the weekends. I suppose if I was measuring my time in terms of *'time relaxing v time not relaxing'* instead of *'time working and volunteering' v 'time not working and not volunteering'* I'd realise how much I'm doing. I discount a lot of what I'm doing from being work, I think, or maybe because it's so fragmented it's harder to realise how much there is.' (Except from Diary 1: 05.08.2015:4.10pm)

Millie adds some notes next to her hand-drawn time-line, listing all the activities she has to do that day. It would appear that upon reflection of her time-line, she realises that it doesn't quite include everything that she had planned for the day. The requirement for her to return to her diary time-line and comment on the activities missing from the diagram, show just how messy and overlapping the temporal dimensions of our daily lives are, and how time diaries don't always account for all the various activities one gets through in a day – and how our emotional mind set impacts on our ability to achieve our planned activities as successfully as we might intend.

'Somewhere amongst all that, I also have to cook dinner, make a card, sweep the house, do the laundry, write a 3000-word film review in Spanish. Not mad keen to go in today, I guess my aim for everything is just to get through the day in one piece. P.S. week at home was perfect!' (Millie: Diary entry: 19.8.2015)

During the conversation with Millie, I asked her how often she took time to relax and how important relaxation time was to her. Millie answered that she hadn't given it much thought until our previous conversations, but had recently been reflecting upon her relationship with time - especially with regard to the gendered aspect of how men and women relate to time.

'If I say, for example, I had ten hours I would feel I would have to be doing something nine of those hours and [take] one[hour] to relax, which is stupid because I'm like "you have to look after yourself" - so one hour out of nine [ten] you have to relax (laughs) whereas like a lot of the guys I know will maybe just be like "I have to achieve stuff", but if they achieve it in an hour they'd just be like "fine, I'll go to the pub now" whereas I would be like "you have to

achieve for nine hours!" I had like a four-day thing of doing loads - I've been trying to do my dissertation over the summer as well and so I've read like twenty books so I'm like "*you need a break - finish all your sewing projects in the next four days*". But, that's not a break that's just a different kind of work' (Millie (RC)_Interview, 4.9.2015).

The conversations we had around expectations of time and workloads, were something that Millie had been reflecting on, and in a sense, helping her to realise (what may be an obvious point, but one still worth making): that before any negotiations, it is good to work out what one's priorities are. Her observations about different kinds of activities and work as variations of labour, allowed her to be less strict with herself, and to make it good with herself for slowing down a bit more. Millie's observation 'that's not a break, it's just a different kind of work' says something about 'work-life balance' as a phrase and how that 'maps' onto Elias's 'we-I' balance. It's not a straightforward work equalling 'we', or life equalling 'I' correspondence.

Returning to the interview with Millie, who happened to be sewing at the time, I asked her further about what other things she did to relax. Millie had a long list of activities that she was consciously trying to do: sewing, drawing, writing, yoga, running (a marathon) and rock climbing – and was trying hard not to compartmentalise her activities quite so much. Some of her activities, of course, had to be planned, but others, she felt, could be done when she felt like it, and for as long as it felt good.

'I'm trying to do as much as feels good and find some sort of creative thing every day and if you end up doing that [creative activity] all day, it's fine cos it's *your day* (her emphasis) and you're allowed to do that.' (Millie (RC)_ Interview, 4.9.2015)

Asking what the women did to relax appeared quite difficult for some. Asking if they spent time doing things just for themselves also caused some difficulty in answering. And some of the women in the study really struggled with this concept. Disentangling personal time from time used by or with others, and claiming it as 'their own' proved rather difficult. Partly because for women, there is a blurring of personal/public boundaries of their time, and partly due to feelings of guilt for claiming time for themselves.

For a great number of the women, their volunteering, participation and activism was what they did for themselves – even though this was ultimately time spent also doing things for others, and this gives support to Elias's notion of I and we-identities being balanced and connected rather than rigidly separated. Alison, who worked two jobs, and volunteered at Rape Crisis, did not work Saturdays and set aside time most Saturdays to walk her dog in the park with her friend, before going for coffee and 'catching up with gossip'. Rhona (WFI), on the other hand spoke about her time as 'it's all me' (chapter 8) when discussing the various aspects of her life. Gracie (TR) spoke of never settling, and of getting bored if she wasn't busy all the time engaging with other people. Many of the women from the dance group associated their time at dance class as their time and what they did to relax and have time away from family and work – even when this involved the charitable activities involved with being part of the group.

10.1.1 Messiness of 'me' time

The boundaries of private/public time are rarely clear cut for many women, and I was curious about boundaries between volunteer time and personal time. For example, do Rape Crisis volunteers ever finish a call on the helpline and continue to think about that person at home? Does time for caring just stop according to clock time, and how difficult is it to draw a line between different times in one's life? Similarly, with others in the

study, in what ways did their voluntary activities overlap with their own time – and how did they negotiate this? There was a great deal of discussion throughout the fieldwork in relation to time: ‘being on time’, ‘fitting things in’, ‘setting aside time’ but also confusion around ‘own time’. For some of the volunteers, their volunteering was such a part of their identity that they saw what they did as part of their own leisure, or pleasure time.

Rape Crisis volunteers were particularly skilled at keeping clear emotional boundaries between their personal and volunteer times. It is something that is part of their training and RC as an organisation are particularly strict with ‘professional boundary’ rules. Support workers are encouraged not to give or receive hugs (as comfort or thanks) from women who use the service. However, concerns and thoughts that enter one’s mind at any given moment of the day are harder to control. While RC workers (and volunteers), are encouraged not to take issues home with them, but to discuss any concerns with their own support worker, there are occasions when one thinks about something that has happened – even if they are encouraged not to dwell on a particular case. I remember my own experiences as a volunteer support worker, and thinking about particular cases when sitting at home reading, or watching TV or even making dinner. As a trained worker, one knows professional boundaries, and that one cannot be responsible for another person. However, caring doesn’t just stop when one walks out the door. At the same time, as a support worker, one does not dwell, and while thoughts of someone might float into one’s mind, they tend not to stay there very long.

‘I’m pretty good at drawing a line under things, I just think that I’ve done all I can and I can’t do anything to help that person now. That’s it. I’m not heartless enough to not sometimes, think about someone later on, just wonder, but no, I try my absolute, and it’s not good for me to worry about stuff. I have enough to worry about all on my own so, no, I draw a line under it the majority of the time. I think you’ve got to be able to do that. I don’t think it would be

good for any of us to leave and be worried sick about a woman because, she's her own person too and she's got to in some way take help from other areas in her life' (Alison(RC)_Interview, 17.9.2015)

Gracie from the dance group was a particularly busy woman, and I asked her how she found time to learn the dances that she taught in her classes, while also looking after her disabled daughter, her grandchildren, organising the pantomime and helping to run the local community centre. The following is a conversation with Gracie and her daughter Clair, describing this messiness of time.

Gracie: [Husband] has basically realised over the years that there is no point in complaining, so when I have [husband] time I often go away and learn my dances.

Researcher: so this time with your husband is really.....?

Gracie: what is left.

Researcher: Would that be what you would call your own time?

Gracie: Yes

Researcher: so you are still really using what you would describe as your own time, doing things for other people.

Gracie: Yes

Researcher: is that what you do to relax then?

Gracie: I can't relax, I get bored.

Clair (daughter): She always moans that she's never got time, that's she's got 20 episodes of Neighbours to watch cos she never gets a chance to watch them. So I say to her, go and put your feet up for a wee while. 'Right' she'll say, 'I will'. Then I'll get a text from her

saying she's bored. Or she will tell me she's been up the loft looking for panto stuff... her head never switches off.

Gracie: My head never stops, when you were talking there, I was thinking about what I would do when this was finished.

(Interview, 12.2.2016)

The pantomime group were particularly interesting to talk to about the messiness of time and, because they also learned their lines at home, and created some of their own costumes at home, their community activity regularly overlapped into other times in their lives. Margaret spoke of practicing her lines while walking her dogs. Katherine rehearsed her lines at the dinner table with her husband, or alone in front of the hall mirror. Beth and Bella rehearsed together while driving in their car or on outings to the shops – and all of them spoke of finding accessories for the performance while out doing family shopping. During the months from September to December, the pantomime performance was rarely far from their minds. They rehearsed their lines while cooking, and even while in bed before going to sleep. I tried to calculate how many hours they must use during these months, solely on their community activity (pantomime), however it was difficult to guess exactly, however I would certainly say, it must have been in excess of 150 hours for each of the women.

Roberts discusses time sovereignty – referring to individuals' ability to make their own decisions about time – and when something should be done. While this is often a middle-class prerogative, some people do have opportunity in their lives for time sovereignty. As mentioned earlier, one of the volunteers in the study worked part time in a restaurant and was responsible for creating the work rota – allowing her to arrange her own times off to volunteer. Time elasticity as described by Roberts (2002, p.176) is made in reference to allocating jobs to others to allow one time to do something else, or by doing things more speedily. Paying someone to do the ironing, housework, mow the lawn so

that one has time for other activities could be, in Roberts' understanding, 'elastic time'. While for many women in this study, this was not often something they did for themselves, they were often the ones taking on those roles so that others could have more time for their own activities.

10.2 Group identity

Wilson and Musick's (1997) study of formal volunteering appeared to position very informal volunteering as 'helping out' – and while that may be the case for some of the women in my study, given that some of the participants did not identify as volunteers, Wilson and Musick's description focused on kinship and family helping. With regard to actually identifying as groups of volunteers, very few of the women in this study identified as volunteers. Whether the women themselves identified as volunteers, their activities and actions could be seen to fit within some of Kelemen et al.'s (2017) categories of volunteering – specifically, altruistic (helping) and militant (activism/campaigning) volunteering. For most of the women in the study, their activities could be seen as altruistic volunteering - linked to ideas of selflessness and working toward the common good. The women often said what they did was an act of generosity and giving of one's time to help another person. The WFI and Rape Crisis could also be viewed as militant volunteering, 'stressing the collective force and activism of their activities' (ibid., p.1248). Within this militant type of volunteering, aspects of altruism also exist, and so volunteering cannot be confined to a single category. The struggles that some of the women had identifying with a volunteering label were positioned around three main areas of unrecognition:

1. Being a political activist, rather than a volunteer, despite activities and actions that fit within categories of helping others and the wider community.
2. Below-the radar informal volunteering and not recognising oneself as a volunteer.
3. Skill and training – some of the volunteers at Rape Crisis felt that their skills and training were at risk of being overlooked by the label ‘volunteer’

This in part may be due to assumptions about time and labour and if something is done for free, then it is worth less than something paid for.

‘In, society, people assume that if you do it for free, it must be something that anyone can do, because if something has any kind of value that value must be monetary ...so if you are doing something for free then it must be not very useful’ (Millie, RC_4.9.2015).

This supports my earlier mention of timely commitments being valued more than the value of activity or outcome. Most whom I spoke with described themselves simply as *Rape Crisis Support Workers*. Another volunteer said that while she didn’t call herself a volunteer as such, she felt an equal unease about being called an unpaid worker. ‘I don’t think anyone would do it if they were called unpaid’ (Niamh, RC). Similarly, the WFI activists shied away from the label of volunteer, feeling that what they did in their communities had a much more political agenda. Many of the women throughout all of the groups were inclined to associate the term ‘volunteering’ with kindness and

generosity of time, rather than that of 'making a difference to society'. Others, like those in the dance group, viewed volunteering as something one did on a formal basis, and not similar to the leisure activities they saw themselves as part of. It was clear from the conversation had with all of the women that 'volunteering' as a label is multi-layered, fluid, and open to interpretation, depending on the circumstances of each individual and their wider social relations.

Throughout the ethnographic fieldwork, poetry workshops, and interviews with the women in this study, stories of personal change seemed primarily significant. These were not simply stories of motivations for joining the groups the women were a part of, or for reasons of remaining with the groups. What I was hearing were processes of identification and belonging, and not belonging, felt by the women themselves, and mainly occurring due to their relationships with each other in the groups but also through the other relationships in their lives. There were feelings of kindness and generosity attached to what they felt they were doing, in addition to the social ties and developing bonds of kinship within groups that fostered trust, and provided support for some. This in turn made their volunteering more likely to continue. However, there were also conflicting stories of guilt, pressure, burn out and tiredness from trying to conduct their lives according to the other uses of their time – and of trying to fit too much in. Being aware of these aspects of other women's lives in turn made me more aware of them in my own life, and of the perceptiveness of the question 'who's got time for that?'.

I was sitting in Stirling just the other day, I had been at a meeting and was passing the time until a dental appointment. I loathe shopping so was sitting on a bench when an elderly woman approached and sat down beside me on the bench. We got talking and she told me all about her husband who had passed away: how they met before the war, and how they married when he returned. I realised I would be late for my dental appointment if I continued

to sit with the woman – and that there was a risk the dentist may not even see me if I arrived late. At the same time, I was also acknowledging how enjoyable our conversation was, and that it was not just the elderly woman who was getting pleasure from it. In the time that we spent sitting, I was a listener, a comfort, a friend, a stranger, and a learner, (as she shared recipes with me and passed on tips about life skills). I was conflicted by the guilt I felt about being late for my appointment. While it might appear that I was dealing with one thing at a time, rejecting the idea that I could only be a dental patient *or* someone sitting talking to a stranger, within that duration of time of sitting with the stranger, I was simultaneously all those identities (Fieldwork notes: July 2016).

Bastian highlights this simultaneity in her discussion of Gloria Anzaldua's poem '*A bridge called my back*' (Bastian, 2011). Bastian here argues that Anzaldua's rejection of certain notions of identity is actually challenging certain notions of time that suggest we can only respond to things in a purely linear fashion and that time is divisible into single unitary moments or 'nows' within which only one thing can happen at once. Of course, our understandings of time suggest that we can only do 'one thing in any given moment', however, that was not how I felt when conflicted by the emotions of staying where I was, chatting with the woman.

Participating in the community and feeling a sense of belonging, or identity with a particular group, is a fundamentally temporal experience, the interconnections between belonging and the self contributes to our understanding of how people experience time and develop a sense of self. We experience belonging in and through time, and this experience of time comes to colour or affect what belonging means to us and how we identify as members of groups and communities. The duration of that belonging and the significance of time can be witnessed in the ways that belonging is built up over time. As with collective identity, individual identity is inclined to be depicted in linear fashion that

is informed by past experiences (May, 2016b), however belonging can be simultaneous; it can waver, cease, and be felt again. It can be multiple, and complex, unnoticed, and jarringly obvious.

Frances, from the WFI group, discussed her thoughts of being in the community where she lived. Her motivation for joining the group had been one of purely political reasons, rather than any interest in her immediate community. However, through joining the group, her interest in her community had developed and she had taken to visiting a local café in an attempt to get to know her community and construct some kind of collective identity with the people in her locale.

Frances lived in one village, played golf in another, and worked in a nearby city, however since joining the local group in the neighbouring town she felt a need to develop links in her immediate community, and so began this process by visiting the local café.

‘I started to go into the café, and over time, they’ve gotten to know my name and what I like to order. We chat about things in the community, and my being a member of WFI....., and I do feel, perhaps in wee tiny ways, you become part of your community by doing that. I’m not doing anything; I’m just sitting there’ (Frances: Interview. November 2015)

This not doing anything, just sitting there, in the community space, is part of a process of socialisation and belonging. Slowly within this process of making herself visible in the community, people have gotten to know her name, her likes and dislikes, shared similarities and the differences between other individuals that frequent the café, and other things that are necessary to create strong communities. However, the building of these relationships also helps with our own identities as members of networks.

Likewise, the women in the dance group who attend the dance classes for companionship in addition to learning new dances, or even the women on the helpline at Rape Crisis who sit quietly, saying very little on the end of the phone, show the significance of time spent, rather than just a passing of time (Knights, 2006).

All of these groups, and the members within, have a history that impacts on the others within the group in specific ways. The groups shift and change and adapt as new members join, and so too the older members, and this happens without any real planning or intention. It is a process discussed by Elias:

‘The impact of each other’s lives on each other, and how these groups and interactions impact on each other, changes individuals and societies and communities in specific ways – so that it has a history which takes a course which has not been planned, or intended, by any of the individuals making it, or considered in isolation’ (2001, pp.10-11).

Millie’s discussion of this in previous chapters, where she talks about the importance of cross generational interaction within Rape Crisis, and what she herself brings to the organisation as a woman who identifies as bi-sexual, highlights the impact of individuals on groups.

The interconnected nature of the members changes the group identity over time, and vice versa. As new people come and go, so too, the functions, beliefs and aspirations of the group change and adapt. It is this we-I balance, and the elasticity of self and group identity within these networks that impact on the identity of those within the networks. The WFI group could be seen to shift and change as new women joined, and as new members became more confident. In the early days of the group, it was decided that the group would have no formal constitution – that it would function on a very informal

basis, without specific roles (chairs/secretaries). They would hold no finances, nor have a treasurer. However, as time passed, some members felt it necessary to 'get things done', and to 'stick to agendas' if the group was to progress. While there remains no formal group, with trustees or named roles, certain members have taken on more formal roles of organising events and administrative tasks. This is most visible within their online activities – which I will discuss in the following chapter.

10.2.1 A place to talk

For the women in the dance group, it was clear that the dance lessons were only one part of the reason to be there. The meeting up with one another, catching up with local news, and friendly advice are all part of the 'essential ingredient' (Shercliff, 2009) of the group, and while meeting up to simply 'blether'⁶ is often viewed as a 'waste' of time, doing something *useful* or active, while this takes place somehow gives permission for this chit chat to occur.

'I like a wee blether while I'm here' (Lilith (TR)_informal conversation during fieldwork)

Emma Shercliff notes in her writings of women who sew "Just as the stitching articulates pieces and garments of cloth into a larger unity, the idle chatter 'binds together the participants, articulating groups members as a community'" (Shercliff, 2009, p.192). Shercliff's description of 'women's chat' could also be developed by reference to feminist

⁶ Blether – Scottish slang for casual chat or gossip.

reassessments of gossip which have found it a more empowering phenomenon than the constraining one that Elias and Scotson portray. Gossiping and street life can be considered 'sources of neighbourly communication and mutual aid' (Lewis, 1984, p.54), and sources of useful information (Tebbutt, 1995).

The women in the dance group used local gossip to inform the decisions of worthy causes to support through their fund-raising activities. The members of the dance class would be asked by Gracie if they knew of any local people or charities who might benefit from their support. These types of local knowledge are often the kind that is passed via word of mouth through local 'grape-vines'. Stories of local residents who were ill, or in need of financial support, or even young students saving for university, were all offered for consideration. In addition to the nominee's basic information, discussion in smaller groups within the room could be heard as members discussed in greater details the difficulties experienced by the individual. Sympathy could be expressed by imagining these difficulties but also by some who may be able to share in this identity by saying 'oh, I know what that's like, it happened to me too'.

Gossip, both supportive and critical toward members of the dance group, was also a common occurrence. Concerns about members' ill-health or well-being were amongst those most discussed, particularly in relation to lifestyle choices and associated ill-health. Group identity and gossip as 'praise' or 'supporting' (or rejecting) a particular sense of identity could also be noted within the WFI group. This is similar to the findings of Elias and Scotson who observed that gossip had the capacity to either enhance or tarnish reputations (1994).

Given that WFI women adhered to a particular political ideology, members of the group could often be found praising aspects of this particular political philosophy in favour over the opposition. In doing so, they were also praising the way in which they saw themselves as part of that group: generous, caring, and with a social conscience. In praising the

followers of independence as (all) decent folk with a socialist conscience, and the opposition as being in total contrast to this, they felt satisfied that they were 'at one with their own community and their own conscience' (Elias and Scotson, 1994, p.92). This praise of 'like-wise' individuals, of fellow community members who were 'people like us' sat in direct contrast to those who did not think similarly.

How can people be so selfish?
The ill-found opinions, as relentless and inevitable
As never ending thankless housework
Drink tea, school runs, do the email
Work. Work. Work. Work.
Open the door to fast flowing
Wondrous women
Midnight blue in their forbidden thoughts
Everyone loving everyone
Even in the differences
(excerpt from poem by SF)

The basis for which they heaped blame (via gossip online and offline) on those who did not support their beliefs was centred around what Elias and Scotson described as the 'minority of the best and the minority of the worst' (1994, pp.7, 159). The women in the group tended to take the worst aspects of those who supported a 'Better Together' or 'United Kingdom' view, and judge them by the worst examples of this – such as examples of sectarianism in Scotland or Conservative policies that remove or cut benefits to disabled members of society. However, they often failed to acknowledge that sectarianism always has two sides, or that there will be members of 'Better Together' who adamantly oppose harsh Westminster policies that often fall unfairly on the most vulnerable. Of course, it has to be noted that there were examples of this 'blame gossip' occurring on both sides of this political argument, but my data relate to the WFI 'side'

and are reported on here to illustrate the point that gossip makes it hard for an individual to go against the dominant discourse of the group.

News and social media items detailing negative aspects of opposition parties and groups, were savoured much more readily than any negative news about Independence supporting parties or groups. The blame gossip appealed more directly to the group's sense of their own righteousness, and provided some pleasure at being able to talk about these things in a group that reinforced their own ideas of decency and social conscience. The idea they could engage in discussion about the kinds of things they would not support, and talk about it with others, was 'proof of their own blamelessness' (ibid., p.93). This was also evident within their online group, which I will discuss in the following chapter. There were however examples of this in some of the poetry that emerged from the poetry workshops.

I dream about people and places
I try to stay positive
I hope that people will care about others
(MVO, 2015)

I touch with all my being
I worry the momentum will be lost
I cry when needs are not met
I understand the fear and uncertainty
I say I want equality
I dream of differences being embraced and accepted
I try to contribute and be informed and grow
I hope for a different way if being
(MD, 2016)

I am part of our community
Sharing ideas, thoughts, perspectives
Responsible, and understanding
If not me, then who
If not now, then when?
(LF, 2016)

I am courage and vision
Wondering when justice will arrive
I hear our relief, in time
I see care and compassion
Where women belong
With courage and vision
(KA, 2016)

Extracts of poetry from the group workshops 2015, 2016

For many of the women there was a sense of investing something. The time invested in the groups or projects gave them a sense of relationship, and a sense of belonging as part of the relationship. Their membership of the project or organisation was seen as valued and important, and gave them a sense of worth – not simply because they were helping others, but because they were an interconnected part of something bigger.

‘..it’s like Rape Crisis, the centre, that’s really important to me, and I think also, this space as my work environment, I feel a sense of belonging because people say, "oh do you know what happened to the woman..... do you have her files? Do you know where this went, I saw you left a note, can you talk to her about this" so it’s like you’re part of the [centre] and one of the cogs in the machine...’
(Millie (RC)_Interview 2015)

10.2.2 Balancing individual and group agendas

Self-restraint for the good of the group is one outcome of the process whereby people find ways of living with each other, balancing individual and group agendas, and prioritising the 'necessities of interdependence' over 'momentary inclinations' (Elias, 2000, p.380). As mentioned earlier, there were differing of opinions on how the WFI group should operate, with some preferring a more active, formal agenda, and others who were happy to go with a more relaxed arrangement. Those with the most time, energy and/or a powerful sense of ambition or determination were, for the most part, seen to be most active and setting group agendas. Each of the women in the group had various causes that they were interested in, in addition to the over-all Scottish independence journey: Some were keen to promote 'brand Scotland' (Watson, 2018), others were keen to fight to remain part of the EU, while others still were keen to promote the 'independence for women' aspect of the organisation and campaign for women's rights. Finding a 'balance between one's own self-fulfilment and self-restraint' (Elias, 1998, p.263), reining in one's individual agenda for the good of the group, is a continuous but crucial part of what makes a group work well.

The dynamic of the dance group was one where examples of self-restraint were jarringly obvious during the ethnographic field work. The group members had, over time, come to know one another outwith the practices of the pantomime rehearsals, and knew each other's characters pretty well. On embarking on the pantomime as one of the cast members, I found myself uneasy at times with the ways in which some members spoke to one another, or participated in what might be described as 'banter' or teasing. As the performance date drew closer, stress, fear and anxiety caused one particular member to have lower levels of patience than she might normally have, and it was not unusual to hear rather uncomfortable chastising of the group members from this individual.

However, members rarely reacted on impulse, retaliating or arguing – there was indeed a great level of self-restraint from group members. It was acknowledged that the member did all the organising, preparation, and on the whole, the vast majority of the work involved in putting on such a performance – and that she was otherwise, ‘really kind and does so much for everyone’. It might be suggested that the group, given their history together, understood or accepted the position that, while perhaps not agreeing with her behaviour, given that this member took on all the responsibilities, they would accept her ideas of what was acceptable, or ‘good enough’. Without self-restraint, it would be impossible to achieve ‘the we-I balance’, a key aspect of group organization, and working well together. There are no examples of ‘self-restraint’ from the Rape Crisis volunteers. The volunteers (from RC) were helpline workers, so carried out their voluntary duties in a small, enclosed room, and did not interact with other centre members to the same extent as the women in the other groups.

10.2.3 Am I good enough?

Giving up one’s time on a regular basis is something that many volunteers give a great deal of consideration to, perhaps asking questions of themselves - ‘Will I have time for this?’ ‘Am I ‘good enough’?’ (Silva, 1996). They might ask ‘Do I have the skills as well as the time to carry out this work to a satisfactory level?’ or ‘Will I be able to keep it up, and am I in it for the long run?’ There is a fine balance and a matter of restraint between doing what one wants to do, and thinking what might be best for others.

There is also a process to volunteering. Considerations have to be taken on board as to the cause or organisation, the time, place, and how one might fit in. Prospective volunteers might fill in application forms, and sit on waiting lists, others may fall into it by ‘accident’. Some, like the members of the dance group pantomime may not think of

themselves as volunteers at all, or find that their integration into the group is part of a slow, gradual process that goes a little unnoticed, and so perhaps do not give much consideration to what they taking on. On the other hand, for some, being part of the pantomime was considered to be 'for the long term' and that anyone contemplating taking on such a role should 'think carefully before committing' as it was 'quite exhausting committing to all those weeks and months of rehearsals' (Beth (TR)_Fieldnotes, Dec, 2015)

The volunteers at the Rape Crisis Centre in this study apply to the centre and wait for the next available intake of trainee volunteers to begin training. Some, like Niamh, waited almost a year to start the training process. As discussed earlier in this thesis, the training takes place weekly for approximately six months. The training is designed to not only provide volunteers with high levels of required skills, the six-month training period acts as a way of allowing volunteers time to really reflect on whether what they are about to embark on is suitable to their lifestyles, and to experience what this commitment will be like. It is not unusual to find a small percentage of trainee volunteers drop out over the course of the initial six months, and this protects both the centre (from losing volunteers at a later date), and those who might be tempted to volunteer without giving enough thought to what it might entail. During this period some may find that it is not suitable for them, and so have the opportunity to leave without feeling too guilty about letting the centre or themselves down.

Volunteering (whether one takes on the label or not) may be viewed by some to give greater agency to negotiate, because as a volunteer one is aware that what you do is up to you – you're not an employee, or compelled to volunteer: there is a 'freedom of participation' and the 'ability to drop out' (Kelemen, et al., 2017 p1241). However, while there is 'freedom' in being able to drop out, there are 'rules' around what you can do as part of a group or organisation. The relationships the women in this study have with their

groups appeared to impact rather unfavourably on their agency and ability to negotiate freely, at least without any feelings of guilt or letting others down.

A great deal of conversation from all members of the groups was positioned around members feeling a sense of responsibility toward each other, their organisations, families and friends. On almost every occasion of asking members how they might feel if they couldn't make it to a meeting, or help out when required, all mentioned feeling some level of guilt, and/or of letting others down. They almost all however did add to this by saying, that they knew others wouldn't mind, and that they knew they shouldn't feel that way.

Millie was describing feeling a little guilty about turning down some extra shifts at the RC centre. While she felt somewhat guilty, she also believed that these feelings of guilt were more to do with social expectations, rather than her own internally-generated feelings of guilt.

'I used to feel really bad if I said no [to an extra shift], but I think it's more like I *should* feel bad but I don't feel bad, you know? Like the other day, I said "I need to do less shifts, it's getting too much for me", and she (volunteer coordinator) was like "Oh that's a bit tricky" and instantly I was like "Oh, I can do more", and she was like "No, you've just told me you wanted to do less"... and, I didn't *feel* bad, I just felt like I needed to indicate that I felt bad. I think that's just a social thing. I don't think that is necessarily specific to the centre.' (Interview: 4.7.2015)

However, Millie did follow this up by adding that perhaps she didn't feel overly guilty because she knew that she had been committing more time to the centre (than other volunteers) – and that if she hadn't been doing extra hours, then she may have felt guiltier. Millie struggled back and forth with why she should or should not feel guilty

about saying 'No' to extra shifts. There was to-ing and fro-ing of emotions where she tried to make sense of how she was feeling – 'I know I shouldn't feel bad, but I do...but I shouldn't'. On one hand she argued that if she had been doing fewer shifts, then she might have cause to feel guilty; on the other hand, colleagues were teasing her about 'never leaving' the centre – which made her feel a bit better. Nevertheless, she often felt bad having a free evening when the centre was having trouble finding someone to cover a shift – but she quickly tried to ease her conscience by reminding herself that there were plenty of other volunteers and staff involved with the centre – and it didn't always necessarily have to be her.

'I do feel bad when the helpline is not going to be covered and I have a free evening and I could be here doing it. I do feel bad about that, but then I am also like 'there are plenty other people involved here', so they could cover that shift. It doesn't always have to be me.' (Millie_Interview,2015)

Contributions of labour are often valued in a higher respect by the hours spent, rather than the activity – or even energy used to carry out the activity (Hochschild, 1997). It was interesting to listen to this participant justify saying *No* to a shift and having some time to herself, not only because she had (in her own opinion) been giving a substantial number of hours to the centre, but also because her extra hours spent there had been noted by others. I wondered how those with less time to give viewed themselves if they had to say *no* to a shift. While all of the groups did insist that volunteers and members were appreciated for whatever time they could give to their respective groups, there was evidence of members being subtly chastised for being late or ill - for example, Margaret with her flasks of tea.

Showing up when ill was another way of avoiding letting others down – or even proving one was ‘good enough’ to be part of the group. Bella arrived for the pantomime rehearsal one Sunday afternoon barely able to speak. She had a very bad cold, was losing her voice, and suffering from a ‘stuffy head’. Throughout the rehearsal Bella commented on how difficult it was for her to remember her lines that day. Putting her hands against her temples, she exclaimed,

‘This is the scene I cannae get right – my mind just isn’t on it today’.

I asked Bella why she didn’t just stay at home when she was so unwell, and one of the other members answered,

‘Cos if you sat in, you’d just end up sitting in the house. Once you get up and get here you feel much better’.

Bella then added to the conversation, stating that as the rehearsals progressed, it was important that everyone attend. She added that although each cast member could rehearse their lines at home, there was a need to hear how they worked ‘in synch’ with everyone else’s lines. There was a suggestion that one had to attend, whether sick or not – or the whole group would be let down by the non-attendance. If we reflect back to the previous section and the discussion around the gossiping about members’ ill-health and lifestyle choices, we might understand why members who are feeling poorly, may feel uneasy about not attending rehearsals. Not only might they feel guilty at letting others down, they might also be aware of related gossiping about their non-attendance. This is not to suggest that any members of the group would insist on another member’s

attendance when they were terribly poorly, nevertheless, it does allow some understanding of the ways in which members put the group needs before their own, and how group dynamics, gossip, and responsibility toward the group impacts on feelings of 'good enough'. Turning up when unwell might also be demonstrating to others as to how one is 'going the extra mile' – adding value to their attendance.

The responsibility many of the women felt toward each other could not be denied. Even those in the pantomime who initially told me that they 'weren't volunteers' – but were instead 'just having a laugh', felt a great sense of loyalty toward the success of the performance, the group and to Gracie (the group leader). Beth likened her commitment to the pantomime to her commitment to babysitting her grandchildren – she wouldn't dream of letting them down. 'Sometimes you're tired and can't be bothered going', she said, 'but you've given your commitment, and so you go'. This likening the group to her family highlights in some sense how difficult it might be to 'let the group down' – they weren't just a group that one helped out – they were like family.

While the pantomime cast have the privilege of receiving adulation from the audiences they perform to, and knowing they have entertained, and raised money for one cause or another (and that they were indeed, *good enough*), volunteers on a helpline often have the difficulty of not knowing how helpful they have been to a service user. They can only try to help the person on the end of the phone for the period of time that the person stays on the line (although the caller may take what has been said and repeatedly find it helpful), and so there will be times when the volunteer feels that they have helped the person, and other times when they might question how much help they have been. There will also be times when no calls come in, so leaving the volunteer with the less direct satisfaction of having been available if needed.

While there was a sense of pragmatism, in being aware that there is only so much one can do on the end of the phone and for a limited time period, volunteers still (at times)

questioned whether what they did was 'good enough'. Over time, and with experience, volunteers learn to 'switch off' when they leave the centre – and not take things home.

Sometimes I feel they've left, and I've done nothing. If they are in absolute desperation point, I don't think anything can lift them but sometimes, I can come off the phone and I know she's just enjoyed that wee chat with you...it's lifted her and she has felt better and she has thanked you at the end of it...and that's nice - you know. So you know, I'm really pragmatic about what I can do on these couple of hours on the phone, you know. Once that person hangs up the phone, that's it, you can only do something tiny for that short period of time. But I don't go home worrying about it very much, I'm able to just switch that down (Alison (RC)_Interview, 2015).

However, I want to draw attention to Alison's quote where she says "*I don't go home worrying about it very much, I'm able to just switch that down*". She didn't quite say that she forgot about the women she supported on the helpline – she said that she didn't worry too much about it – and that she 'switched it down'. This would suggest that the hours spent in the centre on the help-line, were in fact, extended to her life outside the centre on some level.

Volunteering work doesn't necessarily end when one 'leaves the building', rather some of the work may be in thinking about things (in one's own time), contemplating how one could improve the next time. It wasn't unusual for volunteers to seek help and support from management or a volunteer support worker. Rape Crisis support is an emotionally challenging role, and while volunteers are highly-skilled and trained, the title of *volunteer* can often bring with it suggestions of 'not quite good enough' from those outside of Rape

Crisis, but also from the volunteers themselves who can at times question their own abilities and skills.

This was often noticeable when I was with the volunteers in the helpline room. There was uneasiness to begin with that people often have when being observed. Some of the volunteers spoke of feeling uneasy when being observed by staff, or if staff entered the helpline space. The volunteers *knew* they were good enough - they had been told this many times by management during appraisals, however, the very thought of being observed continued to make them doubt their skills. Management were also aware of this, and commented on this.

‘I think it’s just something to do with them not being paid staff, and seeing themselves as not quite as good as paid staff. We don’t think that though. We see them as highly-skilled support workers’ (Carol-Ann: Informal conversation. September, 2015)

Stress factors associated with the everyday, by its repetitive character, and expectations of ‘getting everything done’ can impact on one’s disposable time. RC volunteers and workers have a great deal of support in dealing with demands on their time and emotional energy. Generally, they felt appreciated by the centre and this was summed up by a diary entry from Millie.

‘A woman-centred approach doesn’t mean I have to do anything and everything every service user wants – I’m here because I have willingly taken on a responsibility within my community, not because I am forced into it as an obligation, I’m here because I want to be here, and if people start asking things of me that I don’t want to do, I don’t have to stay. But the fact of it is that I do want to stay’ (Diary 1. Entry: 20.8.2015, 4.30pm)

However, even with the greatest support, we can be left feeling anxious by events that happen unexpectedly - incalculable moments that impact our time negatively, but by their very nature cannot be planned for. Train delays, traffic hold-ups, sick family members – events that often leave us feeling less than good-enough, but are part and parcel of everyday life – but which are not often appreciated as such.

‘That time I had to call in late (because I was stuck in traffic). It made me feel really bad, really guilty cos you're relied on in here and you feel like you are letting everyone down’ (Emilia (RC)_Informal conversation).

Feelings of guilt for not having, or finding, or making time for family and friends, or to achieve, and generally ‘*never having enough time*’, was something that most of the women in the study spoke of. However, it was the women from RC who spoke about this the most. Some of women from the other groups were either retired, or participated with their groups in a less formal, less frequent manner – which may have impacted positively on how they felt their timely negotiations were being managed.

‘I feel guilty for not making enough time for my friends/family and also a list of things that I want to achieve and never having enough time. I am far away from quite a lot of my friends and hardly get home to see my friends and don’t see my family enough’. (Niamh (RC)_Interview. 27.7.2015)

The routines and rhythms of our lives, as mentioned previously, often go unnoticed and only become apparent when something jars us out of the familiar. Millie used her diary

to note entries and observations around routines and work which she described as 'putting into context for myself' (Volunteer diary 1: Entry 5th August 2015).

'I was really excited to start this yesterday (there are few things as promising as a blank notebook) and I knew exactly what I was going to say for today, starting with the first of my ten face-to-face sessions for the first time! BUT, it turns out I woke up at 3am last night and didn't get back to sleep til it was light and all I want now is a lie in' (Diary 1: Entry: 30.7.2015)

This diary entry from Millie highlights how we come to expect a regular routine of waking and sleeping, and rely heavily upon this routinized aspect of our existence. It also highlights how very easily incalculable moments in our daily lives can disrupt us and knock planned events sideways.

We can also be caught unexpectedly by a change in the tempo of what we have become accustomed to, and this sudden change can impact on our confidence and ability to 'do things properly'.

"It's been really quiet lately and then you come in for a shift and it's mad crazy... I think you get kind of lulled into.....if you haven't had many support calls for a while and then you suddenly get one [busy shift] and you feel as if you are saying all the wrong things. Every time I come in and someone calls and it goes silent for a bit, I go "Uh, I've forgotten my '*silent script*'"⁵. You worry... maybe there is

⁵ Silent script – for times when the centre receives calls from users who feel unable to speak. The helpline worker will go through a series of responses to help the caller. This will include offering advice, contact addresses, and wider support. They will stay on the line for approximately 15 minutes. At the final 5 minutes, they will inform the caller that they will end the call in 5 minutes, 3 minutes and 1 minute, so that the caller knows what to expect.

something more I can do to help this person, and I always feel like..... like I haven't helped.... (Niamh (RC)_Interview: 27.7.15)

Niamh's quote might suggest that she feels good about herself when she knows she has helped others. This other-regarding outlook fits with Elias's idea of a we-I balance.

Guilt is an emotion often associated with not being all things to all people or letting people down, however 'good enough' can often be a way of settling things with one's own conscience – or finding a temporary balance between the I and the we that allows one to say, 'that's good enough, I've done enough and I have to think of myself for a bit'.

'sometimes I have shifts where I don't know if I've been particularly helpful, like I'm not necessarily the right worker cos the person who's come in, or they've called and they've asked for something that I can't give them, and I don't necessarily know if that feels less useful than when I have a really good session, because I'm aware that it's all part and parcel, like I know I can't help everyone, but that doesn't mean that the work I am doing is any less valid, it just means that we weren't the right match or that I don't have those skills yet and that's fine...' (Millie (RC)_Interview. July 2015)

The national organisation of WFI, with their policy of 'not apologising' could also be viewed as a way of saying 'what you are doing for now is good enough'. 'This is meant to be fun' (Nicole, WFI: interview August, 2015), and if you overdo it, then it won't be enjoyable any more – it will become a chore.

10.3 The timely process of gaining self-confidence

There is a duality of personal satisfaction and doing something for others in many of the women's descriptions of what they did: a difficulty to untangle the personal and

community well-being. While in many cases the main motivation might be to help others, in the process, the women also felt better about themselves.

Being members of the groups provided the women with various experiences of increased self-confidence, gratification and affirmation. The process of learning new dance steps may not give the women in the dance group 'instantly gratifying results' (Shercliff, 2009), however the process of learning a new dance, or even the process of learning cast lines may act as a slow but purposeful experience. The extended training schedule at Rape Crisis similarly gives volunteers a stretched out period of learning to process their gained knowledge. This stretching of time and the process of learning may sit in juxtaposition to current societies where 'speed and efficiency are, on the whole, highly prized and generously rewarded' (Shercliff, 2009, p.186). Taking one's time is often considered inefficient or wasteful, and is often discouraged. However, the slow movement has contested this and proposes that it may just be that it is the temporal element of 'learning' or 'creating' that is of a high value ('The Slow Movement', 2018).

Beth and Bella both spoke of increased confidence (in various aspects of their lives) since becoming cast members of the pantomime. Beth, who said that prior to joining the pantomime group, she would never sing in public – and now, she loves to get up and sing Karaoke – particularly when she is on holiday. Bella, who spoke of never being very confident all through her life recalled attending a group interview for a well-known supermarket. She described how the group of interviewees were asked to design a structure from paper straws, and whereas she would have previously allowed someone else to lead the group, she found herself taking charge and delegating tasks to the group of interviewees. This was something that took her by surprise when reflecting on the interview scenario later the same day, but it has obviously had an impact on her given that this interview took place a number of years ago. She put this increased self-esteem and self-confidence down to performing on-stage as part of the pantomime, and being part of a group that supports one another. The group, she said, offers space to share

ideas without fear of rejection. Bella did recall, however, her first performance, several years previously, when her nerves were so bad she was almost physically sick before walking on-stage. She described the shift in her confidence immediately following that first performance as

‘That was it, I had the bug. I loved it. I absolutely loved it. Now you can’t keep me away’.

Bella also recalled calming another cast member prior to her first performance. Katherine was equally angst-ridden and unsure whether she could carry out her first show. Bella proudly remarked, “I told her, ‘you’ll love it’. If I can do it, anyone can”

Katherine, had joined the dance group as part of a recovery process following a traumatic family event, and after several months of being part of the dance class, found herself agreeing to becoming a member of the pantomime. Katherine spoke of the time it took her to agree to being a member of the cast. December was a particularly difficult month for her and her confidence suffered during this period of time. Katherine often found attending classes and rehearsals difficult and a constant source of inner battle – forcing herself to attend (so as not to let herself or others down). She spoke of often doubting herself, but that being part of the pantomime had turned her life, and that of her husband (who would help her rehearse at home) around. It was the faith that others had in her that persuaded her to agree to be part of the cast.

‘Well, someone must have confidence in me if they think I can do it, so I took it from there...and now I *do* have confidence in myself.’
(Katherine: Informal conversation_20.9.2015.)

At the end of the first show, Gracie told me that Katherine turned to her and said “Thank you, for giving Christmas back to me. I’m going to spend Christmas with my family for the first time in years”.

Similarly, Millie, found that the sense of validation she gets from being a part of RC, and the sense of belonging from being with like-minded people, and doing something ‘concrete’ that she knows ‘makes a difference’, has increased her own validation of her abilities.

‘I guess it’s kind of like, the sense of validation that you get... the people I am friends with, who are young people, a lot are in feminism and a lot are activists online and on twitter and it’s really not making that much of a concrete difference. Whereas I really do come here and I am like “something happened today and I achieved something”’ (Millie, 4.9.2015)

Even those women who considered themselves ‘laid back’, found their beliefs validated – and sense of comfort and belonging in being with others who shared their concerns and beliefs. It is relatively easy to find others of similar opinions within online community groups in a digital age, however there is something quite different in meeting others in person, and having opportunity to share ideas and have your own ideas challenged, validated and developed further.

‘I never thought I was opinionated, I always thought I was quite laid back. During the training, everything just felt so right and I thought yea - that's exactly how I feel. I don’t know if I feel any different but it’s comforting to know’ (Niamh (RC)_Interview, 27.7.15)

The discussions from the women in the study raise the point of how being part of a supporting network can impact positively on one's self confidence, but also that one's self-confidence changes with age and life experiences.

'I think I'm quite confident in my own skin now, the bottom line is I don't care (laughs), but that's taken a long time, because I think when you are younger you are always wanting to be appreciated by your peers and accepted whereas when you get older, it's less a need. Now, you take me as you find me.' (Marjorie (WFI)_Interview 16.12.15)

10.4 Poetry: an internal conversation

In this chapter, I have been discussing internal negotiations volunteers have with themselves, and perhaps struggle with, as they find a balance between their sense of self as an individual, and as a member of various networks they belong to. Previous chapters also discussed the explicit and implicit negotiations within their networks, and I would like to expand on this briefly within this chapter, taking into account the conversations we have with ourselves: the internal conversations we have in our heads, when working things out; practicing saying something to someone, working out which route to take on a journey, or what meal to cook for the family.

We are all an accumulation of the interactions we have had with others throughout our lives, and our sense of self (and of others) is formed through evaluating those interactions. We each add interpretations to our past experiences, and to that which we have been taught by others (Elias, 2001). The decisions we make throughout our day-to-day lives depend upon the relationships with others around us. We think things over in our heads, making judgement calls, and struggle with problems: always discussing internally what our next step might be. If you recall my discussion on how I spent time sitting in the shopping mall talking with the elderly woman, deliberating whether I should

risk being late for the dentist by staying with her a little longer, you will gain an insight to the conversation I was having with myself at that time. However, the problems people struggle with internally are often difficult to 'get at' within research.

It is at this point I would like to return to the use of poetry - discussed earlier in the methods section of this thesis. In my discussion on poetry as a research method, I touch upon the 'difficult to get at' aspect of research: those internal struggles that are so part and parcel of everyday life, they go almost unnoticed. The hidden, and sometimes overlooked thoughts we have as we negotiate our way each day.

Poetry can be thought-provoking, and encouraging of a more reflective mode of consideration and I would like to return to the template of 'I Am' (Appendix 3.2) and draw attention to more of the poetry that emerged from this exercise. Poetry allows the writer to explore and externalize their own experiences - in a similar way to how one might have those internal conversations. It is possible to view the women's poetry as an expression of the 'internal conversation' (Archer, 2003).

During the poetry workshop with this group, it became clear that although the women in this particular group met often, worked hard as activists within their local community, and considered each other as friends, there were elements to their lives, perhaps previously unknown to each other, which came through in their poetry. Writing poetry, or reading another person's writing, has an 'inherently absorbent' (Bartlett and Milligan, 2015, p.2) element to it that allows one to reflect on their thoughts, and when used within research, allows people time to ponder, rather than immediately responding to interview questions. Using poetic representation as part of a wider research project can produce connections that create a 'scene' that feels familiar to the reader, yet allows the author to share hidden aspects of their lives.

Calynn's poem, for example, describing her 'worn and sore' body, visibly moved the other women in the room. Everyone was aware of Calynn's disability: group members

were able to see her walking stick, and the stiffness of her body. However, she did not often speak of the extent of her pain, and her poem allows us an insight to her life, as an activist living with a painful disability: her hopes, dreams, and realities.

I am Worn and Sore

I am worn and sore
I wonder,
'can I get a minute's peace from the pain?'
I hear rasping grating bones
I see twisted swollen joints
I want to run freely up mountains
I am worn and sore
I pretend my mind sails above this ache
I feel as though I am an illusion
I touch *Everything*
I worry I do not feel
I cry no tears, but miss the fabric of friends,
now gone
I am worn and sore
I understand the joy of young grandchildren
I say "*I know what I used to be*"
I dream that the future can be better
I try to be wise for my children
I hope they learn from my mistakes
I am worn and sore
(CP: WFI, Dec 2015)

Another member, while being keenly active in her community, was a quiet, shy individual, however the poetry that emerged from the workshop revealed something quite different and I was surprised by the content of her poem.

I Am (Mad as hell)

I am mad as hell and
I wonder when I'll cheer up.
I hear lies,
I see injustice and
I want change.
I am mad as hell and
I pretend everything is fine.
I feel too much,
I touch the fire and
I worry it won't feel hot any more.
I cry, not in pain but in desperation.
I am mad as hell because
I understand their motives
I say far too little but
I dream of how things should be and
I try to make a difference.
I hope, over fear but
I am still mad as hell.
(KF. Wfl. Dec 2015)

While Patricia Leavy (2009) suggests that the use of poetry offers an alternative way of presenting the same information (as perhaps that gathered through interviews), I found that poetry is capable of producing a different kind of data: that there are stories that emerge through poetry that may not emerge through more traditional forms of research methods. It could be said that the poetry that emerged during the workshop offered an alternative insight into the lives of these female activists.

Calynn's statement 'I know what I used to be' and her dreams for her children - hoping they learn from her mistakes, appear part of much bigger conversations she is having with herself as she imagines a better future. Kara, who was a quietly-spoken, but bubbly character, conveys something very different in her poem. She was 'mad as hell' and had

probably been struggling with this for quite some time. She was a dedicated activist, but never came across as ‘mad as hell’ – in fact she was often quite self-restrained. She appeared to be an organised individual, who gave little of her emotion away. Her poem told a very different story, illustrating the point that a rounded understanding of a person needs to attend to both ‘I-identity’ and ‘we-identity’.

During the interviews and conversations that took place during my fieldwork, many of the participants spoke of their activism and community engagement with passion and positivity; one might even say, with a tendency to avoid stating the difficulties and disappointments, yet within the poems tension between their desires and visions of what they do, and the realities of overlapping temporalities within their busy lives emerged.

‘As an engaged method of writing that evokes emotions and promotes human connection and understanding, it [poetry] can capture a unique aspect of the human condition, thereby expanding our understanding of social reality’ (Leavy, 2009, p.68). This shared understanding, and the relationships between the micro and macro ethics of empathy, show the obligation women often feel toward each other, as strangers and as friends, by being able to say ‘I feel the same way’ (Margalit, 2013). The workshop setting allowed the women to direct the conversation, often branching off from their volunteering and activism to wider aspects of temporal negotiations.

Calynn’s poem (below) makes use of the colours blue and green as an expression of her disappointments, sadness, dreams, and hopes for the future – recognising, within her poem, the ‘provisionality, responsibility and necessary failure’ (Levitas, 2007, p.290), that are inseparable in her imaginings of a better future. These uses of colour also highlight the challenges of expressing our emotions, ideals and relationships.

Pretending that I'm happier than I am
I feel disappointed.
Blue
I touch my disappointment
Concerned people will give up
And I cry
Blue and green
Time heals
When people really care
Old friends come towards me in my dreams
I try to give my family fun
And hope they find joy in life
(CP. WFI, 2016)

We thought we could be a different voice

We thought we could be a different voice
(Totally generalising)
Maybe men just sit there and talk politics
Women want to 'do things'
Maybe we could change the model
No consensus. Nothing formal
We changed the vibe of the hub
to much more community based
and gave it a soft but positive vibe
Made it accessible while children played.
Volunteer implies
We do this because we want to,
Activist means
We do it because we have to
We thought we could be a different voice
(KF. WFI, April 2016)

I Am warm, yellow orange.
My compassionate colour
Representing my most mindful moments
And what I am surrounded by in times of despair.
Enjoying;
Coming together in community.
In solidarity. A quiet knowing
That we are sharing a political vision;
That we try; that we accept each other,
And that we can find voice
(I often find it difficult to find voice in mixed sex spaces, but this feels
different)
Motivated;
Knowing that we are a group that's part of a network
And that the network is working for positive change
In movement together in different locales
Hopeful;
That pro-Indy momentum continues;
that I'm able to be part of local change
That the world sees a better image of Scotland
And that that image shows our reality.
(Crystal (WFI): April 2016)

Crystal's poem describing being part of a group that 'moves together in different locales' brings in the notion of time, as did other examples of poetry from the group that spoke of histories, and the future. Time perhaps thought of as types of shared time that 'bring differing experiences, histories and anticipations into a certain alignment by virtue of a shared moment in the present' (Bastian, 2011, p.153), however, these multiplicities of time, and the negotiations of such can be far from harmonious and can induce feelings of self-doubt and deep concern in an individual when attempting to negotiate changing futures.

The women here appeared to view themselves not simply as a sole individual, but as someone who is part of something bigger. The women describe themselves in their poems by their concerns and hopes and actions, and in relation to the networks of people around them. In addition to this, they describe themselves by their many identities, and in accordance to all the roles that they play: identifying the interconnectedness between themselves and others in their lives.

In a framework of private/public dichotomies, where women's civic engagement and temporal experiences could be suggested to still focus on the private – even when concerned with the public, the poetry allowed those personal experiences, spoken by the women themselves, to reveal the purposeful, public nature of their work, while also reflecting the overlapping multiplicities of self and time connected to the home and to their community. The narrative of this could be that, as researchers, we find the 'we' less often than the 'I', however in this study, where the rationale is communities, the women wrote and spoke about themselves and their lives, not (always) in the first person, but often as a 'we'.

10.5 Well-being, disability and age

It is through and in our bodies that we are able to make sense of the world, and so this section discusses negotiations of the self around bodies, disability, ageing, and health. In his book *Rhythmanalysis* Lefebvre (2004) notes that the biological rhythms of our bodies are conditioned by our social environment, and our working lives. This is evident in societal sleeping, eating, and working patterns: If we eat at 7am, 1pm and 6pm each day then our bodies will learn to be hungry at these times. This training of bodies became evident to me during my time spent at RC. Part of the support worker's training reinforces the idea that time in the support room is given solely to the service user. Support workers are therefore asked to eat, and to use the lavatory before entering the

support room – reasons for this being that one cannot offer full attention to listening when troubled with a rumbling digestive system, or being aware that one needs to visit the loo. It's certainly not the best time to be dashing off to the toilet or grabbing a bite to eat, and our bodily requirements play a role when considering our plans for events – and highlight the ways in which we train our bodily functions to suit our social environments. Children at the pantomime rehearsals were similarly told to 'use the toilet' before rehearsals began – and certainly before the pantomime performances. Accordingly, audiences of the pantomime performance were encouraged not to use the lavatory during performances if possible. Davies (1990) also highlights this in her study of female factory workers who were 'tied' to their machines and only allowed to leave their station during 'official breaks'.

Ill-health and feeling unwell was a common topic for conversation (especially during winter months). Group members would attend meetings and rehearsal when clearly unwell and when asked why they didn't stay at home; they all spoke of not wanting to let anyone down. This 'not letting others down' appeared to be particularly linked with concerns about being 'good enough,' discussed previously in this chapter, and how the person might be viewed by others. Initially I suspected that their attendance when unwell, as evidence of obligation to the group and not wanting to let other's down, however, there were a few occasions within one of the groups, where members were spoken to in a particularly unpleasant manner for being late, or absent, despite individuals being unwell. Again, when I asked about attending versus staying at home – every response I received was in relation to not letting anyone down.

'Not feeling well, got runny cold and bad cough, but got panto practice and have to go although I don't feel like it' (Diary 4: 19.11.2015)

'Still not feeling well but need to go to practice as some of the others can't make it...don't want to let [name] down' (Diary 4: 22.11.2015)

Clair was discussing getting back to her routine at home following a very severe illness that left her with limited use of her lower body. While she is now increasingly able to do more things about her home, the time it takes her to do these tasks leaves her with very little of her own time to do other things. Clair proceeded to talk about her voluntary work at the community centre and her acting role in the pantomime as a disabled person. She commented on the time it now takes her to do things that she 'would have whisked through in half the time' (interview, 12.2.16). Helping out at the centre and participating in classes that aid her recovery, often mean her going without lunch because of the additional time it takes her to get through workloads. Clair had deliberated over whether she would include herself as a cast member of the pantomime. Her concern was that people might find that she was pushing her disability "*in their faces*". However, she felt that, not only did she have an equal right to be on the stage with the others, she wanted to show (by example) that performance and community participation doesn't have to exclude members of societies who are differently-able. She acknowledged the difficulties that need to be overcome, especially around time taken (and given) to accomplish things, and around access. During one of the performances her husband has to carry her upstairs to the stage area and changing rooms – and once there, she is stuck there until the end of the performance. However, she feels it is worth it for people to see that 'I can do, within reason, the same as everyone else' (Clair: Interview, 12.2.2016).

Clair was the main script writer of the pantomimes, and wrote herself the part of the 'wicked queen'. Her wheelchair was designed to look like a throne, and she was ugly-fied for the performance. When showing a university colleague, the filmed recording of the performance, he was a little taken aback by the disabled member of the group being cast as the 'ugly witch': a character who is often portrayed as an 'unpleasant outsider'. I had to offer some assurance that the part of the 'unpleasant and mean outsider' was written by the only disabled member of the group herself.

Ageing was another concern for the women in the dance group. Aging bodies sometimes left the women unable to participate as admirably (onstage) as they wished, or that scripts had been initially written for. However, these occurrences were often met with laughter and good humour within the group. On the other hand, the participation in the dance group and pantomime had a positive effect on the women's health and well-being. The twice-weekly dancing classes aided their physical and mental well-being and good health, in turn helping them to feel positive about life and the future. The companionship, routine and enjoyable atmosphere of the dancing classes, in addition to learning through different rhythms and movements, all aided in overall health benefits. Jonathan Skinner noted that 'social dancing leads to a continued engagement with life - past, present, and future - and holds the promise for successful ageing' (2009, cited in Queen's University Belfast, 2009. para 5). The learning and practicing of vast numbers of lines might also be perceived as helping to stave off onsets of dementia in the elderly members.

The dance classes were tailored to match the physical capabilities of older members and those who were beginners. The leisurely pace (although complex movements) of line dancing allowed it be inclusive of most abilities. It is a social activity and benefits both the physical health of older people and promote a sense of well-being and social inclusion. I watched as Gracie took the members through routines, and then turned her attention to the beginners. The more experienced dancers were left to enjoy the routines they knew and favoured, while Gracie 'walked' the learners through the new routines. However, she was able to still call out to the experienced members who messed up their steps – teasing them along the way – and making the new learners feel not quite so bad when they fumbled.

10.6 Chapter Summary

It is difficult to untangle personal and group rationales for volunteering - whether one identifies with the label or not, or whether one does it to better oneself, as a route to gaining opportunities for paid work, or for altruistic or militant reasons of bettering society. This raises questions, also highlighted by Kelemen et al. (2017), around the ways in which volunteering intersects with individual and collectivist incentives, and the we-identity and I-identity discussed by Elias. 'Getting the balance right' for volunteers and group members becomes a process of self-restraint and inner resourcefulness on all members at one point or another.

We have seen from the previous chapters all the areas that the women in the study are negotiating with in order to find time to volunteer, and this chapter has presented examples of emotional dilemmas that are part and parcel of 'working things out with oneself'. It is these internal conversations around what they have learned as part of a we-group and what they are able to identify with as individuals that often causes internal conflict.

This chapter also shows the ways in which gossip, both praise and criticising, is used to keep people together in a group by suggesting they are the same, and 'people like us', and although some areas of research highlight the constraining side of gossip – as this study does in places, there are other areas that highlight the positive side of gossip – the supporting solidarity side of 'people like us' gossip.

Social cultural practices continue to construct women as carers and nurturers, not always by means of direct restraint by others but by self-restraint, putting off doing things for oneself in favour for doing things for others and feeling guilty if taking time for themselves. However, as this chapter develops, we see that some of the women are able to step outside and distance themselves from the 'norm' of gender roles - although

for some it took a crisis at home, or traumatic event to do this. Nevertheless, this stepping back and looking at themselves with a new light can perhaps also allow them to see things in the community (or around them) that need improvement. It would be impossible to achieve the 'we-I balance', a key aspect of group organization, not least synchronisation, without self-restraint. However, there is a danger that exercising self-restraint may be taken too far, so that balance is lost and the individual becomes entirely given over to the welfare of others and 'altruistic surrender'. We are all aware of the extreme individual and how that is not sustainable for well-balanced, happy societies, however, it's also good to remind ourselves that the extreme altruist, which there is some evidence of in this chapter, is also quite dangerous and can be bad for one's health.

Time is quite elusive in nature. Although it impacts on our lives in multiple ways, it is often difficult to grasp what time is when discussing the issue with research participants. Getting at what time for others and for the self means isn't always easy to discover, however, the examples of poetry in this chapter give insight to these inner thoughts and conversations that people have with themselves when making judgement calls about 'Have I got time for this?'

11. Aspects of non-human negotiation

The three previous chapters have identified and discussed three quite different areas of negotiation for women who volunteer, however, it leaves one questioning whether the time for volunteering has to be negotiated with something less tangible. A great deal of literature on 'work-life balance' presents a rather private/public dichotomy of home and family life versus work and leisure time - and which assumes a rather static model of the home as a fixed space in which family life is experienced. However, recent sociology and family research acknowledges family connections and intimate relationships across global borders (Ehrenreich and Hochschild, 2003) and those using digital media to stay connected (Jamieson, 1998; Longhurst, 2013; Rakow and Navarro, 1993; Sawchuck and Crow, 2012). David Morgan stresses that 'family practices are not necessarily practices that take place in time and space conventionally designated to do with 'family' that is in the home, rather families are actively constructed through day-to-day activities of their members, inducing places of work (Morgan, 1999, p.20 cited in Wajcman, 2016, p.142). These remote (away from the home) forms of family life are being facilitated by the ubiquitous nature of digital technology, and so this section explores the ways in which the women in this study engage with 'non-human' entities such as new forms of digital culture in their endeavour to negotiate the networks to which they are attached.

Advances in mobile phone technology have meant that our networks are always accessible, tapping into the intrinsic and natural human desire to connect, and the basic human need to feel part of a wider society. The argument that digital connectivity is fundamentally social in the way in which it reflects society may be understood as an updated version of the older idea of people being a part of a system, similar to Elias and Scotson's community (1994). It is, then, the ways in which human beings negotiate the boundless possibilities of digital media that determines its impact on society and its ability to connect and constrain people.

11.1 'It's your group calling'

With regard to the three organisations in this study, Rape Crisis used mobile phones occasionally for contacting members for change of rotas or for asking for help if any volunteer had called in sick. However, in terms of service users, mobile phones allow callers to call the helpline in private, in their own time - and not have to wait until the home land-line was free, or having to wait until the home is vacant to make the call. The Rape Crisis helpline also makes use of texting and instant messenger - which are available for use on most smart-phones. These methods of communication are becoming more popular among service users - especially those calling for support for the first time. It is not uncommon for first time callers to Rape Crisis to find difficulty in 'finding their voice' or the courage to speak to the support worker on the other end of the line. Non-verbal methods allow callers to move past this fear by providing a link to help that doesn't require speaking aloud. The asynchronous nature of email (and messenger – although messenger can also be synchronous in that one can message in 'real-time') also allows service users to access the information and communication that is waiting for them, and when they feel emotionally able to deal with it. It also means that service users can have control over the times they want to connect without calibrating their time to others' schedules. Of course, text and instant messenger also provides deaf callers with a means to accessing help. While there is the technical competence that has to be acquired with the use of these types of technology, there is also the risk of volunteer time creeping into other times in their lives than their allocated shifts: checking of work related emails during evenings and weekends – something that is highlighted in Wajcman's (2016) analysis of how 'work' seeps into 'non-work' time. In addition, volunteers who are trained to support women face-to-face and by telephone also now have to negotiate these new ways of supporting clients, given that negotiating with people through digital media is different from negotiating with people face-to-face.

In general, WFI as a national organisation did not use phones to contact members. Almost all contact was conducted by email, website and social media - however, members may of course access these platforms via their smart phones. Mobile phones were seen to be used within meetings, where phones could be seen on tables and inside bags. Phones were used mainly for note-taking or organising dates in calendars, however, there were also occasions during events where phones were used to find out the location of a member who had been 'held up' or 'on the way'. The dance/pantomime group, on the other hand, predominantly used mobile phones to organise and connect with one another. However, this was mostly by text, and most often to make last minute changes to pre-organised arrangements. Digital communication changes the nature of interaction and connectedness. On the plus side, we can keep significant others up to date with our situation, but on the down side – as Wajcman (also Lim, 2014; Ling, 2008) point out – we are potentially always 'on call' and thus lose some of the benefits of 'me time', that is, that time when we are answerable only to ourselves.

11.2 Mobile connectivity

'Selfie Selfie in my hand
Who's the fairest in the land?'

Without much explanation, the question above provides the reader with a glimpse of the rapid changes in our societies given that most UK readers, should easily recognise the question as an adaption of the famous lines from the fairy tale, *Snow White*. The question above (from the original fairy tale) was re-written by the pantomime group, who although (mostly) consisting of retired women, are aware of the embeddedness of digital technology in our daily lives. The question speaks directly to the way in which our social

world has accepted digital culture into the everyday practices of many people's lives through the use of mobile phones and internet-related social media.

While we often focus on the impact of new communication technologies in relation to boundaries - landlines being situated in the home or workplace, static, and with time boundaries (one had to be in the building to receive the call), with calls being made to the building or phone box, mobile phones - and smart phones, allow calls to be made directed to the person, and can connect us anywhere and anytime (provided there is a signal and available Wi-Fi connection). These technologies 'facilitate idiosyncratic patterns of availability' - to the extent that individuals no longer acknowledge much of 'the divide between these categories' (Wajcman, 2016, p.142). This study has been exploring how women negotiate time in the various aspects of their lives to facilitate their volunteering activities – and an area of findings that emerged from the study was the impact of digital technology on the lives of these women and the ways in which one has to negotiate these new technologies to fit in with new understandings of being social.

During the period of time of my fieldwork, I met with only one woman (from all three groups) who did not use a mobile (cell) phone. Margaret, one of the pantomime group, did own a mobile phone - a second-hand phone given to her by her husband when he upgraded his own phone. However, Margaret chose not to use the phone. She found it difficult to understand and to work - and so chose not to carry it, or use it. However, at a later date, on returning to the group (the following year), I found Margaret was using her phone, now set up by one of her grandchildren. She still wasn't quite sure how to use it fully but could answer calls – although required help to end a call. Margaret told me that she didn't really enjoy having the phone, or care to make much use of it, however, she felt pressured by family and group members to have a mobile phone so that people could contact her. Margaret really didn't feel the necessity for this, she felt that she could be contacted at home via her landline and that she didn't feel important enough for anyone to feel that they needed to contact her at any time.

‘What’s anyone needing to get hold of me for? They could just wait till I get home surely. I’m not that important am I?...and I’m never that far from the house that it couldn’t wait’(Margaret: Informal conversation, 2016)

Margaret told me that she had photographs on her phone, put there by her granddaughter. I watched as she asked other members of the group to show her how to open the gallery app so that she could show the photographs to the others sitting around her. After taking the phone from her bag, Margaret unfolded the wallet casing and ‘opened’ the home page. She then handed her phone to one of the ladies sitting beside her and asked her to ‘see if you can get they photos’. Both women tapped the screen a few times until the correct images were found, and the phone was then passed around the group so that everyone could look at Margaret’s photographs. Prior to having, or using her phone, Margaret told me that she would go to the local supermarket, and have photographs printed out from a CD disc her daughter had created for her. She would then bring in printed photographs to show the others. Margaret agreed that having the photographs on the phone was much easier (and much less expensive), even if she was unable to work the phone on her own.

The ways in which the older generation of women in the study used digital mobile technology, and for what uses, highlights the ‘tangled tensions between ageing’, new media technologies and ‘the activities of inter-generational family life’(Sawchuck and Crow, 2012, p.147). Observing women in the dance group, many used their phones to show others photographs of their grandchildren – keeping others updated with special family events. The group used text messages to contact one another during the rehearsal time (although for the one member without a mobile phone, calls to her landline were made to keep her up to date with any changes to rehearsal times/places). Sudden

changes to events or rehearsals, while not frequent, were regarded by the leader as acceptable, given that one could inform (almost) all members of the change before they had left their home to make the journey to the rehearsal location. The ease with which this type of sudden change was taken as acceptable sat in contradiction with the way in which non-attendance or lack of punctuality was not accepted by the group leader, and while everyone might have been informed about the cancellation, there was a distinct lack of acknowledgement that people had previously organised their time to be there. The instant exchange of communication via mobile phones in some ways allows the sudden cancellation of pre-arranged meetings to be more tolerable. Prior to mobile phones, or even landlines, people made arrangements and for the most part, had to keep them. While one is able to inform others of sudden changes, and prevent the inconvenience of unnecessary travel, the ease with which it is often accepted overlooks the preparation people have made to schedule their time around others. There appears to be a non-negotiated understanding that because most people carry a phone at all times, and that calls are now made to the individual and not the home, that cancellations and changes have become somewhat built into the organisation of informal events. 'I tried to call you' or 'I left you a text message' can often be accepted to make up for a poorly organised or change of event. On the other hand, this ability to change the timings of events can have a 'softening of schedules' (Wajcman, 2016, p.144) effect on strict timetables that women often have to schedule their time around. Being able to let others know you will be late, or unavailable offers greater flexibility over schedules and timing. It also suggests that the pace of life changes: long-established plans may end up being changed, and people have to re-think their use of time at short notice, and get used to such 'flexibility' as the new normal.

Other women in the study used their phone as calendars and diaries - this was observed more within WFI and Rape Crisis groups. Two sisters within the local WFI group used their mobile phones to stay in regular contact with one another and had synchronised

their phone calendars so that each knew what the other had going on in their lives in terms of organising their working lives, local events and joint family activities. Those with dependent children used their phones to keep in touch with their children, confirming times for picking them up, or checking when they would be coming home. Some sent text messages to husbands asking them to pick up children or to run errands to the shop (cf. Smart et al., 2004). Rape Crisis volunteers were able to use text messaging to one another to organise shift cover if one couldn't make their own scheduled shift, or a crisis had occurred – although these arrangements were mainly conducted by their social media private group page, which I will discuss in the following section. Older women in the groups used their phones to confirm babysitting routines – and to stay in touch with grandchildren and family members who lived some distance from them.

It was not only women who made use of the phone for family-related activity – male partners and husbands of the women in the study were also 'at the end of a phone'. There were numerous occasions when women spoke of calling their husbands to pick them up.

'I've just to call [him] when I'm ready to leave, and he'll come for me'

(Lilith (TR) informal conversation during which one of the group asked her if she needed a lift home).

11.3 Always accessible

Earlier in this study, I discussed the difficulty women often face with restrictions of time, and how their time is often made use of by others in their lives. While digital technology has allowed us to communicate with others quickly and efficiently, the problematic areas that arise, include that which means we are always contactable. For women, this is

another added pressure to their already busy lives. Wajcman argues that phones are not so much just 'extending work technology' (2016 p 141) they are also increasing social bonds between individual and families - although Wajcman suggests that her study found that social and family calls received during working hours happened more to women than to men - reinforcing gendered character of work-family boundaries.

The development of the mobile phone, and other digital technologies, provide people with a means to break from the traditional distinction work time and home time. Whereas the landline consists of temporal and spatial boundaries (one has to be in the home to access the phone in real time). Mobile phones allow us to be accessible any time, as long as we are carrying our phones and have access to a server (signal) – and charger. Employers and organisations, as well as family and friends have access to us at almost any time and these advances in technology are both enabling and constraining. Members of the groups were contactable at any time – to inform of event cancellations, or to check on if late to arrive. On a number of occasions, Gracie was noted to call children's parents, and members, if they hadn't arrived punctually at rehearsal – and her temperament and patience grew thin if she wasn't able to reach the person on the other end.

For almost all of the working women in the study the use of their mobile phones included work-related communication. Those who were self-employed used their personal mobile phones for both personal and business communication – in addition to using their phones for their voluntary activities. The women in the study who worked for employers often felt that the phone tied them to work outside of working hours – with some speaking of 'switching their phones off when they got home'. Switching off was difficult for many however as their phones were their connection with so many other aspects of their personal lives. This description of 'switching off' phones in a literal sense is similar to the metaphorical use of 'switching off', which some of the Rape Crisis volunteers spoke of when describing not taking 'work' home with them.

Research on women's use of mobile media has also been largely situated around the home and the workplace. The expectations surrounding women's roles in society, as daughters, partners, mothers, friends, neighbours, and individuals in their own right, are as liberating as they are constraining – and this can be 'witnessed in women's use of mobile media as they strive to fulfil both family and professional obligations' (Lim, 2014, p.357). Wajcman (2016) found that women at work are more inclined to receive call related to the home, and to use the phone to check on families. With regard to domestic labour, women also use their phones to project manage other members of the household's tasks, "micro-coordination of family schedules and general household management" (Lim, 2014, p.357).

The age-old joke about women 'gossiping' on the phone for hours is being challenged by recent studies that suggest that women's use of the mobile or smart phone is centred around "the constant updating and synchronisation of schedules among all family members" (Lim, 2014, p.358; also, Clark, 2013). Keeping check on family's daily activities, and project management of household appointments, chores, whereabouts, may mean that these devices are another burden on women in the home.

During this writing up period, I was discussing women's use of mobile phones with my niece - a mother of three children, and local parish councillor. We often communicate via social media as she lives over 500 miles away from me: sometimes outdoors by smart phone, other times from the comfort of our homes. I know she is extremely busy and I asked how often she used her phone to 'project manage' her family and home life. This was her reply (within minutes of me asking).

I'm completely reliant on it, especially the calendar. Every time a letter comes in from school (x3) I add it to my diary along with who I'm transporting where, what they need. I feel like I'm looking at or typing on my phone too much but it's 90% communicating and organising,

liaising and making things happen. I don't think I would be lost without my phone in terms of what I get from it but I think a lot of other people would be lost if I didn't have my phone!

The part of her answer that shone out among the list of things she used her phone was “I don't think I would be lost without my phone in terms of what I get from it but I think a lot of other people would be lost if I didn't have my phone”. We can see here how Elias’s we-I balance has tipped toward the we as my niece described using her phone for purposes external to her own needs.

In the previous chapters I discuss the use of women’s time by others in the home, but this short sentence written to me by my niece, highlights the blurring of private/public time and space relating to women’s time. Even out of the home - at work, shopping, at lunch with friends, women’s time is still being used, and is related to other domestic tasks. The mobile phone, designed to give us more freedom while connecting us with others, may be constraining women increasingly to the home and family life – and now also, community life and how it is managed outside the home. Lim’s study found that for many women, mobile communication has facilitated a “perpetual contact [that] translates into a state of perpetual concern for their children’s well-being (2014, p.358). Rakow and Navarro were perceptive in identifying the phenomenon of ‘remote mothering’, a term that is becoming increasingly loaded as mobile media become more ubiquitous and multi-functional. Hence, while developments in mobile media have helped women implement their parental duties more efficiently, research suggest that this increased connectivity serves to exacerbate rather than alleviate their family commitments, further connecting them to the home.

11.4 Digital communities

In recent years, as digital connectivity has increased, there have been concerns regarding increased isolation and individualism as people negotiate new meanings of self and communities (and time). Anxieties of dwindling community relationships are not new and began long before the ubiquitous influence of social media. Previous concerns and fears have often been tied to the rise of technologies that connect people in new ways: railroads that spoil countryside, or telephones isolating people from face-to-face contact (Rainie and Wellman, 2014, pp.117-118). Sherry Turkle (2011) has discussed fears that people immerse themselves in virtual worlds, isolating themselves to the point of being physically present in one space, yet mentally and emotionally engaged elsewhere. While this may be true for some avid users of digital media, it must also be acknowledged that the capacity for online digital connections to transcend space and time boundaries can be said to have contributed to the lengthening and deepening of social connectivity across the globe. Rainie and Wellman (2014) highlight a study (Hampton et al., 2009) which found that those who use ITC's (internet and communication technologies) have larger and more diverse networks than others, and that while fears exist over the internet drawing people away from local communities, the research found that most internet use has little negative impact on local activity (Rainie and Wellman, 2014, p.119). It is a function of social media to connect people through networks in all different situations, as well as to spread messages of need (ibid., pp.4-6).

The highly social process of digital and social media for sharing and spreading information and demanding change for social good can be witnessed in the recent hashtags movements such as #MeToo and #TimesUp. In relation to this are the ways in which the various social media platforms shape the sharing process through offering apps that allow families and friends to show that they are safe during events such as the Paris bombing or incidents of natural disaster, and the ways in which these platforms are also shaped by those who use them.

Women's rights movements have been quick to capitalise on social media's 'unprecedented political and awareness-raising potential' (Loiseau and Nowack, 2015, p.2), with platforms being increasingly used by women's grassroots organisations to call for greater public accountability towards gender equality and at times provoking a discussion among political and civil society leaders about violence against women in the country. Rape Crisis, as part of the yearly 'Reclaim the night' march, makes use of social media hashtags to draw attention to this event, and more recently the #metoo movement empowered women to share their experiences of sexual violence across social media. The Everyday sexism campaign uses similar hashtags to spread awareness of their campaign of everyday sexism experiences of women in the U.K. Similarly, the Hollaback! campaign drew attention to women's sexual harassment, and offered platforms for women to share their stories online.

Being digitally rooted, WFI, at national and local level, conduct a great deal of their communications online. Their national website offers national and local group information, a blogging platform, donations page and a personal account page for each member. The national and local groups make use of social media platforms to share information with both members and non-members, while individual members connect to these via their own personal social media pages – and linking their personal pages to the various digital networks to which they are attached.

11.5 Secret/closed online groups

While feminist organisations have made good use of the powers of online digital media, online abuse against women has risen so drastically, that feminist organisations often keep some of online spaces 'hidden' for members. The local WFI branch in this study, while meeting regularly in person, keep in touch with their members via a closed online groups. They have a public social media page on Facebook and Twitter, to share events

and news items, however their closed group was used by members as a platform for discussing local and national politics between group meetings, offering suggestions for future events, and an open, but safe space for dialogue of any current events taking place within the group. The page was also used for picking up on points raised at previous meetings, and perhaps points that members didn't quite understand, or time ran out to discuss, or just that it was helpful for members who could not attend. This page is private and one must be invited by other members to join. I was invited to join the page, and while I have commented on the ways in which the women use the page, I will not disclose details of discussions that took place there.

The online space was also used to keeping members up to date with each other's health and well-being, especially those members who lived some distance from each other. In contrast to the public space in which members met each month, and to which members had to travel across the various local and quite rural communities that made up this branch, the online group allowed members to meet and communicate from the privacy of their own homes – blurring the boundaries between private/public space in which voluntary organisations are typically positioned, and bringing to light the fluidity of communities as 'personal networks rather than the static neighbourhoods or family groups' (Rainie and Wellman, 2014, p.122).

During their Christmas project, taking place over the month of December in 2015, rotas and shift changes were organised via the closed group. Typed schedules were uploaded and shared with the whole group. Members would insert their name against the date/time most suitable and re-share the updated version of the document. Others, who were unable to download the document, or re-share, would offer their chosen date/time via a comment on the page and the group administrators would update the document for everyone. The hectic nature of any up-coming event, and rapid document changes taking place did mean that members were rather constrained by having to keep a strict eye on the ever changing occurrences of the group postings. Members updated the

schedule frequently, offering times to volunteer in the project, and it was easy to miss a thread post - especially if conversation threads became lengthy. Private messages were also utilised between members requesting shift changes. Christmas is a particularly busy time for women (and families) and members who found themselves 'double-booked', or of ill-health, relied on other group members covering for them. Rather than make changes in an asynchronistic manner, via the rota, and hope that someone noticed the change or request in time, it was often easier to directly message another member and ask for their help.

Rape Crisis volunteers also had their own online closed groups where members could communicate with each other in safety. This social media group page allowed volunteers to seek/offer advice from each other, especially during their training. It was also used to swap shifts and ask each other for cover if a crisis had occurred at home or a special event had to be attended. This method of direct communication offered members the ability to ask for help in a short space of time - given that all members could view both the request and responses at a glance. The online space allowed volunteers a safe space to talk, although all members were able to view any discussions taking place. Facebook, does however, offer the option of privately messaging other Facebook users without the knowledge of others – as was used by the WFI group to change shifts. Nevertheless, WFI are aware of the exclusionary aspect of online communities. In that there are members who do not have access (for a variety of reasons) to online networks. One of their national committee members discussed this concern with me in June 2015, just before I made contact with the group in this study. This area of concern will be discussed further in section 11.7.

'WFI's roots are digital. It always been an online organisation, but we've really, really struggled to include, digitally, women who don't have access to the internet. We definitely haven't got it right yet, because someone would have to sit and print out things and put them in envelopes and it takes time and money. Whereas you put up a blog,

you tweet, and everyone reads it you know. It's free, and quick so we have, we do exclude to some extent' (Nicole (WFI, National) _29.6.2015).

11.6 Digital presence

Fundraising via social media platforms is another online tool that has empowered local grassroots activism. Both Rape Crisis and WFI use online platforms to fundraise – while also raising their profiles via social media and the use of hashtags. WFI especially use 'crowd-funding' types of website to reach out to the public and ask for donations. The national group website has a donations page and online shop where members and non-members can donate to the organisation and purchase goods from their online shop. The local WFI group in this study used an online fund page to support their Christmas project, so that those who could not visit their shop to purchase donated gifts or donate in person, could donate online to the group's chosen cause.

A few of the women in the study used online blogging as a means of communicating their political concerns, while others narrated their personal (activist) journeys. Online storytelling has its origins in the 'storytelling tradition of community arts practice' (Vivienne, 2016, p.24) - linking to the use of poetry within this thesis, with both 'celebrating the voice of ordinary folk and the creativity of the non-professional artist' (Lambert, 2009, p.79).

The Rape Crisis website has its own blog section where staff, volunteers and service users can submit entries. Women for Independence also provides a blog section on their website that allows members to contribute blog posts. Some of these types of digital media allow users to build a profile if desired, offering space to build a careful construction of the online self, but in general they are used to support the beliefs of the writer and a means to reach a wider public in 'awareness raising' acts. While findings

from boyd (2010, 2014) and Rainie and Wellman (2014) show that social media usage is most useful for the areas 'social connections-networks' the platforms in this study were used predominantly for sharing political and social concerns. In addition, digital platforms such as these allow 'ordinary people...to speak for themselves' (Thumim, 2012, p.136).

Women for Independence National Committee and campaign conducts much of its activities online via its website, social media pages and blogging (WFI, 2018). One of its recent campaigns, 'Justice watch' blogged its progress (Mellon, 2016; WFI, 2016, 2017), keeping members and wider audience updated with its progress.

'Many if not most of us who set out to watch justice in our courts were retired or semi-retired – who else has the time to go into courts to watch justice in action, and to talk to people about their experiences and report on what they have found?' (Mellon, 2017, p.7).

The report captured the 'mass-observation' style initiative, collecting evidence of women's experiences of justice in Scottish courts, and bringing these to a wider audience of women - and to everyone interested in justice (Mellon, 2017). Ailsa, one of the women interviewed from this study, was involved and supported her own group's participation with this campaign. Other women from various local groups also blogged their own experiences via the WFI website blogging platform.

Likewise, Aileen, from the local group in this study has used other Independence supporting websites, social media pages and blogging platforms to blog her own experiences of the Scottish Independence and pro-EU campaigns. Madeline too, has written news articles for local and national papers, highlighting the work the group are doing, but using the private social media group as feedback on the developing articles.

‘Filter blogging’ - the sharing of events external to the blogger such as social or political events (Stavrositu and Shyam, 2012, p.371), is said to empower women by enhancing their sense of agency, and allowing the blogger to create a virtual social community that focuses on a social cause, politics, hobbies or other areas of interest (Droge, Stanko, and Pollitte, 2010; Manosevitch and Tzuk, 2017). Filter blogging in this sense, offers social, political or economic commentary in hope to effect social change (Papacharissi, 2007; Stavrositu and Sundar, 2012), and often draws a wider and less intimate audience than personal blogging.

These examples of women, sharing their personal experiences of political and social issues in a public platform reflects the ways in which they are actively reframing what it means to participate in politics at local and national level – and brings to light the complex and diverse ways that women are negotiating online spaces to participate in a political discourse. While group-centred societies are typically organised in physical public spaces, ‘networked individuals’ (Rainie and Wellman, 2014) can exist in digital communities from one’s own private space. These networks may be ‘invisible’ but they are important sources of sociability. The networks provide connections for women, for whom many had no previous experience in a political sense, and through these connections, their networks, skills, confidence and political awareness increased. It is clear that I have not mentioned the dance group in this section: the structure of this group meant that they did not make use of digital online media – something I will comment on the following section ‘Digital Difficulties’.

11.7 Digital difficulties

While the development in digital technology has provided us with greater means of communication and networking, there is a degree of learning required to operate these technologies – while also having the financial means to pay for access to servers.

Members unable to access internet connections, whether from lack of finances, or due to living in more rural areas with poor digital infrastructure, can be left out of meetings and events if notices of such events are only provided via online communication.

In September 2015, I had been asked by the WFI group to give a short introduction to my study. I met with everyone in a local pub where one of the group was giving a workshop on the use of twitter. I have previously mentioned earlier in this thesis that WFI first began on Twitter, and so the members use it a great deal for sharing their activities and political campaigning. The member giving the workshop, was a lecturer at a nearby university, and had been asked to share her Twitter knowledge with the others. Those attending were women, mainly aged between 55 – 65 years. A screen had been erected in the bar lounge, connected to a laptop and projector. Crystal described how Twitter could be used to raise awareness to the Independence campaign, and to the activities of their group. It could connect the user, or group with other local branches as well as the national organisation – and it could also connect with other Twitter users and online sites via hashtags, tagging and sharing URL's.

The aim of the evening was twofold: to educate and inform the members of advancing digital platforms, for their use as individuals – to develop their skills and confidence, and as a means to raise awareness of their group. The group would decide which of the members would act as administrators of the group Twitter page, and the others would share the group activities with their own followers by tagging the group in any of their 'tweets'. Over the time I spent with the group, quite a few of the members gradually began to use Twitter, however it was usually the same few members who regularly tweeted. Over time, as the women in the group became more confident using social media, shifts in the roles of some members changed. On meeting the group initially, Aileen was introduced as one of the administrators of their public social media page. Madeline had no role as such, and while being a vocal and active member at meetings, I was not aware of her being particularly active online. However, over time, these two

members became very active in 'getting information in and out of clusters of networking relationships' (Rainie and Wellman, 2014 p.49. They might be described as 'bridging ties' between the group and other networks that would be useful to the group and their campaigning (ibid). Rhona and Kara on the other hand, had previously been the active force behind the group setting up and organising for the first year or so. While continuing to post individually online, they appeared to take a step back, situating themselves as a 'bonding tie' (ibid) within the whole group, and acting as a source of solidity and trust. One pair might be described as the publicity persons, ensuring the group and campaign were visible, while the other pair ensured the group stability by, in a way, providing a level of security for members. While giving Kara and Rhona a bit of a reprieve in terms of roles and time commitment, these new tasks added to the roles of Aileen and Madeline and there were periods of high activity squeezed into short time frames for both these members - especially following the Brexit result.

During the field work at Rape Crisis, I went to sit with Alison in the helpline room. Alison, who had just arrived to begin her shift, was trying to type something into the computer and log herself into the RC online messenger account so that she was available for support via their relatively new instant messenger platform. Alison had been on temporary absence from RC for almost a year following a series of illnesses and surgical procedures. On her return, she was faced with sweeping changes that had taken place within the centre and the various means of communication being offered to service users and callers. While other volunteers had taken these changes on board over a period of time (email support had been introduced, followed by messenger, and finally text messaging), Alison had to learn all the changes immediately on her return. I noticed her struggling with the computer.

M: How are you getting on learning the computer?

A: I hate it. I hate it. I hate it.

M: Do you not have a computer at home, a laptop or an iPad?

A: My son's got a laptop and he's shown me, but I don't use it. I just hate that you can press the wrong thing and something can happen and you haven't got a clue what to do. That never happens with paper and pen - you score it out and re-write it. Nothing weird happens.

M: But with the computer, you can type something in and communicate with someone instantly.

A: yea, well, I don't need to do that, I have my phone... yea, I've got my phone haven't I?

M: Well, it's almost the same as your phone, but it's bigger.

A: I do love my phone.

M: You may get to the point where you'll want a computer as well.

(Alison (RC): Interview, 2.9.2015)

Alison did not expand on which of her two sons owned the laptop, and I later recalled her telling me that one of her sons lived weekdays with his father. Alison was a single parent, perhaps unable to afford the luxury of a personal computer or internet service and therefore may not ever have had the opportunity to develop any advanced digital literacy skills. While difficulties with poorer individuals gaining access to the internet may decrease as internet services become less expensive (Rainie and Wellman, 2014), Dorling's studies (also Jarvis, 2005) suggest that people are becoming more polarised geographically, with those who can afford to live in the more expensive – and better (internet) connected areas huddling together, and the poorer households becoming more segregated from society. He expands by asserting that this is happening at the same time as internet technologies expand, suggesting a relationship between the

geographical area in which one might live, and access to super-fast broadband internet services (Dorling, 2015).

The dance and pantomime group had no digital online presence: no social media page or website. A few individual members used Facebook, but mainly for sharing personal and family information and photographs. One or two of the more established members of the group publicised information about the pantomime on their own social media pages as the rehearsal date drew closer, but in general, there was no group related online activity. Gracie was quite attracted to the idea of a group page or website, but said that she would have no idea how to set one up, or how to manage it. Gerd and Stegbauer (2005), among others, have commented on a digital age divide, highlighting the difference in use between younger and older members of society. Nevertheless, Rainie and Wellman suggest that the age divide may be decreasing as 'yesterday's sixty-year old active internet user becomes tomorrow's active seventy year old user' (2014, p.76), and grandchildren support older relatives to gain confidence in negotiating these new technologies – as noted earlier with Margaret and her mobile phone. While age differences are indeed areas of concern where equality to access information is concerned, other areas of difficulty include affordability, lack of time (for training), lack of confidence – especially for those without family members for support, disability and poor literacy skills – people often feel more comfortable admitting to lack of digital knowledge than illiteracy (Royal Geographical Society, 2018).

Social Media platforms do not suit everyone, of course, and digital technology can be overwhelming learning for a beginner, nevertheless, it is not *too* uncommon for elderly members of the UK to have social media accounts. Ofcom reports that four in ten over seventy-five year olds, who use the internet, have a social media account (Ofcom, 2017).

Offering training to women to make greater use of information technology, especially within small informal groups of friends and acquaintances, as offered by WFI, 'increases

women's capacity to participate in decision making and leadership' (Loiseau and Nowacka, 2015, p.4). Given that WFI's initial aims were to empower women politically across Scotland, digital proficiency of members not only help the success of the organisation's public profile, digital literacy skills help women to share their experiences with others, creating a space to exchange knowledge, and to make ties that aide women in reimagining their own agency.

Additionally, digital connectedness has, in a sense, raised the bar of what to expect from ourselves and one another within a standard of what is expected globally, or wider than our own intimate networks – and about people's ideas of what is 'good enough'. A person comparing themselves with others in their immediate community will have one idea of what is good enough, but once we compare ourselves with wider reference groups then the bar is raised. In terms of these groups of women, while knowing about what similar groups elsewhere in the world do may be a source of good ideas, it may also introduce a new level of anxiety and dissatisfaction with what they themselves are doing locally, because most people are going to feel that they come up short when compared to the global best in a way that they wouldn't when comparing what happens in in a neighbouring town.

11.8 Infrastructure and hurried societies

'My work is a fifteen minute drive but if you come out at 5 o'clock it can take forty-five minutes to an hour sometimes.. and it's not just the traffic, you've got to find a parking space - and then leg it up here so by the time you get here you're almost in the state of a panic attack ... and that's no good, cos you can get hit with one heavy call - and that's no good for me - or the service user.' (Emilia (RC): Interview 12.7.15)

Emilia is like Bella, who, earlier in this thesis, noted that she knew exactly how long it took her to get to work -

‘It's pure routine, every morning. Just now it is a bit of a different routine, but I still know how long it takes me to get to work’

Emilia was aware of the traffic congestion and parking difficulties involved in leaving work at a particular time. If she leaves at 5pm, the journey to the Rape Crisis Centre can take up to four times longer than it would if she had left perhaps fifteen minutes earlier. Both of these women provide examples of how individuals have to anticipate what might slow them down or hamper their efforts to juggle work and home demands. Daily travel routines are practiced to a fine art, often in relation to other daily routines in our lives. These difficulties are not, however, confined to vehicular journeys. Beth told of difficulties while walking her grandchildren to school during a period of road closure. Beth had to anticipate the added time it would take to make an extra half a mile journey so that she could get both grandchildren to their respective schools in time. Weather and certain times of the year also plays a role in how quickly we can travel from one place to another. Katherine spoke of concerns she had during winter months with fears of unpassable roads due to bad weather which could impact her ability to attend pantomime rehearsal. Before winter had even begun Katherine was already anticipating different routes and the time differences involved with these other routes.

‘My road is shut off and I sit and go "Now, how long will it take me if I go the other way?"' (Katherine (TR)_Nov. 2015)

Time-keeping seems more important than ever as we continually monitor and check on ourselves with Fitbits, health monitors and step counters. Over the course of the

fieldwork I noticed a number (although small) of women in the groups who wore wrist step counters and health monitors. I observed some of the dance group, not included in the study, who wore these wrist bands while at the dance classes.

As many of the women in this study complained of 'never enough time', I thought about the ways in which we set timers on devices in our homes, anticipate journeys, organise weekly (or daily) trips to the supermarket – while transporting recycling items on the way to save time. Homes across the country engage in daily tasks of 'sorting and storing' an increasing number of items for recycling in addition to all the other daily domestic chores (Jarvis, 2005). Conversations about increasing numbers of household bins are rarely far from group conversations just now as local authorities attempt to meet Government requirements for recycling, and the subject of this occasionally came up within the WFI and dance group – with somewhat opposing views between appreciating the effort being made to tackle waste, and struggles of time and space required to sort out the recycling and where to store the bins.

With our domestic technology devices increasingly designed with timers, speed and efficiency is built into our high-speed society. The duality of this 'structure of human agency and social structure is as enabling as it is constraining' (Nowotny, 1992, p.429). Manufactures design faster, more powerful cars to get us from place to place more quickly, however many of our roads and motorways are at over capacity, congested and besieged with parking restrictions (Jarvis, 2005). Journeys seems to be taking longer while people become more and more frustrated and anxiety-ridden by speed limits and traffic congestion that inhibits them from driving their superfast cars (Wajcman, 2016 p49). Jarvis describes this paradox as 'people feeling more hurried at the same time as the city becomes increasingly paralyzed by this mass of 'busy bodies'' (2005, p.134).

While the tempo of a city shifts and changes during peak hours, it also changes at various times of the year. Being a university city, many of their volunteers at Rape Crisis are

students, many of whom head home during the summer break. Summertime is also the most popular period for families go off on summer vacation – particularly now as schools demand strict attendance codes for pupils and parents can be fined for removing their children from school for vacation purposes. This movement of people away from the city over a short period of time often left the centre short on volunteers over the summer period, and so staff at this time often had to cover voluntary shifts occasionally. This change in institutional time highlights the understanding that time for each of us does not exist in a vacuum. Within an organisation such as Rape Crisis where the need for regular volunteers is crucial, the staff have to think ahead and be considerate of ‘times’ when volunteer support declines.

We might understand time to be a finite resource, increasingly identified with ‘famine’ and ‘squeeze’ (Hochschild, 1997; Jarvis, 2005), or ‘time poverty’ (Pahl, 1988). Lifestyles can be described as ‘fast-paced’ with steadily rising working hours, increasing consumer expectations. Shopping often takes longer because we have more choice, while we simultaneously expect items delivered quicker from online sources. Demands for speed underpin bureaucratic ‘constraints associated with legal sanctions and regulations’ (Jarvis, 2005, p.138; see also Shaw, 1994). Flexi-time, for women often feels like never ending different forms of labour, as the time spent away from the workplace, is, typically for women, time spent doing other forms of work: domestic chores, shopping and child care. As Millie noted earlier in this study ‘it’s not a break, it’s just a different kind of work’.

While householders have opted for automated technology in efforts to save time, evidence shows that the time spent away from these devices is not always used in a leisurely manner. Nicole, told me that she had bought a robotic vacuum cleaner, however, she supported this decision by telling me that it gave her time to do more work for the organisation. Similarly, Margaret, ‘looked’ for laundry to do if the sun was shining. While Margaret owned an automatic washing machine – designed to save time and

labour, given that she wanted to hang the washing outside, she was in a sense tied to the home while she waited on the load finishing.

Changing patterns of behaviour may impact on the prospect of encouraging the scheduling required within calibrating our time on domestic labours with other aspects of our lives. Despite the labour and time saving devices we all own, our disposable time often feels like it is decreasing. Some of the women in the study spoke of difficulties trying to get their communities and group members engaged in activities, with the complaint of 'lack of time' often being given as reason. Some research has even shown an increase in time spent on home related tasks (Bittman et al., 2004; Shove, 2003; Wajcman, 2016). Changes in the labour market mean that there are more double earners in the home, resulting in less time for domestic chores and/or leisure – because while there are shifts in the sharing of domestic chores, women's labour still accounts for two-thirds of total time spent on domestic tasks (Kan, Sullivan, and Gershuny, 2011). Time is not something that sits around waiting to be found, it is not an abstract entity external to the individual, existing in 'fixed immutable units' (Knights, 2006, p.254), but is instead a reflection of social routines and socially constructed practices of meals, sleep, work, and other social relations (Adam, 1990, 1995; Elias, 1992; Hochschild, 1997; Lefebvre, 2004). The difficulty to fit these tasks into busy lives has not resulted in drastically less housework, but in more pressured and stressful lives – and to what some refer to as 'time squeeze' (Clarkberg and Moen, 2011; Southerton, 2003).

The emphasis on time as a quantity based resource, measured and distributed in equal units, and space as gender-neutral, mask important social processes of power that are at play (Bastian, 2011; Bittman and Wajcman, 2000; Bryson, 2007; Davies, 1990; Jarvis, 2005; Wajcman, 2016) and that it is women, for the most part, who have to negotiate them.

11.9 The slow time of crafting

While this section on crafting is not related to digital technology, it has a place here in that it does relate to the 'non-human' aspect of this chapter. Millie often arrived to the 'drop-in' duties at Rape Crisis with her sewing: a craft often associated with domesticity and slow or even fragmented time. Unlike paid staff members who were on duty, Millie may not have the same amount of tasks to fill this temporal space while she waited for 'drop-in' service users, and brought in her own activities to fill in time so that time is not seen as wasted. Revivals of previously 'lost' domestic crafts are increasingly common in popular culture. Knitting has seen a surge in popularity, particularly within feminist circles (Pentney, 2008) reclaimed from its 'grandmotherly image and transformed into a hip and funky craft often deployed for political purposes' (Bain, 2016, p.57). Sewing itself has not quite seen the same revitalisation, however TV shows such as the BBC's Great British Sewing Bee has developed a popular fan base – with the show's fifth series recently being announced (BBC, 2018).

The process of creating costumes is a significant element to the women in the dance group: part of the significance of time spent 'doing', rather than just a 'passing of time' (Knights, 2006) discussed in earlier chapters of this thesis. Exploring the time spent creating these costumes, even if only briefly in this section, highlights it as an activity that takes place over various temporal dimensions. Like their dance routines, and the performance rehearsals, it is a process made up of repeated intricate steps that record a passing of time by the building up of an item or outcome (Shercliff, 2009). It is a fragmented time – wherein the sewing of the costume, (or learning of lines in a performance), can be put down and picked up, slotted in, and easily interrupted without too much difficulty, and while it may be that 'the process is slow, it is nonetheless a visible process that can be appreciated and which give satisfaction to the women' as they witness their performances and costumes develop (Shercliff, 2009, pp.188, 190).

Their costumes and performances often act as a collection of memories of events and experiences. The group members share skills and knowledge, perhaps gained over many years, passing these on, even in the briefest of moments with each other, and condensing time as they do so. They utilise household garments and skills gathered from previous performances, so that each 'new' costume has a history stitched into each piece of fabric and design. While many of their skills have been passed down from grand/mother to daughter with regard to sewing – other skills have been learned in a much more modern way – online! Gracie spoke of learning new dance routines online, which she then passes onto to the members of the dance group via their weekly classes. The blogging of women's crafts has become another area of popularity with blogs functioning as a means of sharing skills and fostering community (Bain, 2016). Group members spoke of learning sewing as a child, the loss of this craft learning in schools, and of the need to pass these skills onto nieces or granddaughters.

'I teach my niece to sew. I have a sewing room in my house and she loves to come and practice on all the scraps of material I have collected'.
I love teaching her. (Bella, (TR)_Informal conversation_8.11.2015)

There is a coming-together of past and future in the present within the making of these items – and within the passing of skills through generations of women. For the women in the dance group, old costumes were recreated into something new, and ideas from past costumes were used as inspiration for new costumes to emerge. Bella discussed using her old wedding dress to make pantomime costumes. She recalled the event, telling me that her wedding dress had been stored away in her home, and Bella, about to be remarried, did not think it 'right' to keep her old wedding dress when marrying someone new. Rather than keep the dress locked away in a cupboard, she decided to

donate it to the group as fabric for costumes. The added value that the used dress would contribute to a cause made this decision more valuable to her.

'I think my mum and dad would be quite happy with my dress going into the pantomime... it was used to make fairy dresses, and the money was going to charity, so that was a better idea for me' (Bella, informal conversation_20.9.2015)

There is a great deal of pride in the costumes the women create for themselves. Bain (2016) draws on Moseley (2001) who reported that 1960's working-class women found the idea of making their own clothes empowering as it allowed them to transcend social classes. While the women in this study were not dress-making in this sense, the completed costumes certainly provided a particular sense of pride amongst those who created their own costumes. Bags of fabric and developing costumes were brought in for the others to admire. Discussions around the time spent making the outfits, shopping for 'bits and bobs' and reminiscing about past costumes was all part of the pantomime experience for these women. Those who were skilled in the craft took particular delight in the praise received from others in the group. Advice was shared and suggestion made as to how some might improve their own designs. Calls and text messages were sent to one another outwith the rehearsal and dance times, informing each other of bargains to be found, or to advise another member of an item spotted that might be suitable for the other members' costume. Similar to Wajcman (2016) and Hochschild's (1997) observations about work time seeping into home time, these women's voluntary time spills into other times in their lives. Alisha, an accomplished dress-maker in her spare time, is called upon each year to help make the children's and Gracie's costumes. Alisha has no visible part in the performance, however, she holds an incredibly important role, albeit an invisible one: working from her home creating the costumes, and later

backstage helping to dress the performers. There is no applause for Alisha, no real reward as such, (although most members of the group did show their appreciation of her skills). However, there were moments when she metaphorically 'bit her tongue' as her idea for a costume, or dedicated hours of work, were not quite met with a comparable enthusiasm from the costume-wearer. In a similar sense to my niece's observation about who benefits from what, (*'I don't think I would be lost....in terms of what I get from it but I think a lot of other people would be lost'*) we can see the extent to which Alisha puts others before herself, getting little in return - highlighting Elias's I-we balance, and also levels of Elias's self-restraint as she says nothing in response to (unnecessary) critical remarks.

In a similar sense to Millie, who earlier in this thesis commented on struggling with what counted as 'work time' and the need to feel busy, many of the women in this group felt a 'need' (or at least some group pressure) to be creating their own costumes. Part of the reason may have been to take some pressure from Alisha, who had all the children's costumes to make, and those of the lead female protagonist, and group leader (who was extremely busy and without the required skills). However, other reasons were those of being 'good enough' members of the group and living up to group expectations of making one's own costume. Volunteering their time as part of the performance was not enough. The creating of costumes, when they could be purchased, (and given the unbeatably cheap clothing industry, it might be more expensive to purchase haberdashery items), seemed to be about using time more virtuously. On another level, although perhaps not conscious of political aspects as such, the women could be described as responding to the mass-produced 'fast-fashion' industry (Bain, 2016; Fletcher, 2010) by utilising slower practices (sewing) in a way that mirror the slow movement that reacted to the fast food industry and hurried societies discussed in the previous section.

There is a purposefulness of these time-consuming activities: enabling a generosity of time to be associated with the activity. Of a social and interpersonal nature, the making of the costumes has meaning to the 'maker as an individual and for the individual as part of a community' (Shercliff, 2009, p.188) that convincingly argues for the sewing processes here to be considered as time given to others through the creation of the garments for the good of the group. Similar to their time spent learning scripts, the time spent on fashioning these costumes was not insignificant, and drew on the women's time outside of the time they 'officially' dedicated to the pantomime. Influenced by 'collective self-praise' and 'group charisma' and perhaps fearful of 'group disgrace' via threads of gossip within the group (Elias, 1998 p 107), the women again can be seen to put the collective needs ahead of their own individual agendas, prioritising their 'we-identity' over their 'I-identity',

11.10 Chapter Summary

Similar to geographic communities, online communities and networks are complex and fluid. People enter and leave, sit silently and listen, or participate actively. The networks are complex structures with 'clusters, cleavages and separate ties' (Rainie and Wellman, 2014, p.41). The asynchronistic nature of online networks and communication allows women some greater control and agency around time, especially for those members of WFI who are scattered across various local, but rural communities. While allowing space for those who wish to be active, and lead, it also allows those who see themselves as wishing to help out, 'a bit of a joiner', to feel part of the community while online.

The seeping into and spilling over of volunteer time, into other times in one's life can be witnessed in the fragmented time of the volunteer. Devices, designed to save us time, now leave us with less time as our attitudes toward comfort, content and accessibility shift, prompting not more time spent on activities, but more time doing more of these

activities. Ultimately, and unequally, these bleed into women's time. This bleed-over effect was also observed with the costume making and practicing of the script for those women in the pantomime – reinforcing why it was a worthwhile discussing it in this chapter.

Digital connectedness, while empowering and giving agency to women in the form of extended networks from which to connect and seek advice and support, also constrains through the ways in which one is always accessible. In addition to this, there are wider implications of being good enough when compared to much larger networks of people.

With respect to time priorities, it should be noted that while there is a need to recognise time as multiple and subjective, linear understandings of time might nevertheless be understood as quite useful, even if it's only at the level of someone asking 'who has got time for that?' One cannot be in two places at once, although mobile technology engages with ideas of this because it has allowed this to be overcome to some extent: keeping in touch with people while physically somewhere else. RC volunteers on the helpline and instant messenger also show examples of this, however the pantomime group would not appreciate members skyping into the rehearsals. Digital technology while offering greater flexibility around scheduling, also demands that people get used to such 'flexibility' as the new normal.

12. Conclusion

This thesis set out to ask who has got time for volunteering. This is a question worth asking because time pressures are a widely-reported feature of many people's lives in the modern world, and in the context of such shortage of time it might be expected that volunteering activities would be among the first things that people would give up. After all, volunteering is by definition a voluntary activity, which distinguishes it from activities about which there is less choice. For people who have to undertake paid work for economic reasons, for people who have responsibilities to care for family members (not least those things enshrined in law), and for people whose responsibility for their own self-care may be coming under pressure, volunteering might be seen as a 'luxury', and something of a lesser priority. A common-sense answer to the question 'Who's got time for that?' might be people fortunate enough to have time on their hands, that is, people who can be described as 'time rich' rather than 'time poor'. From this point of view, volunteering is a leisure activity, undertaken by people who have surplus leisure time.

The findings of this thesis cast doubt upon this common-sense perspective. Using the work of Norbert Elias and also that of Janet Finch and Jennifer Mason, the research was designed to investigate how volunteering for different types of organizations fits into the lives of ordinary women. The focus on women was justified by their identification in the existing literature as the unsung backbone of voluntary groups who take primary responsibility for the informal activities that make these organizations 'tick'. The three groups of volunteers also turned out to differ according to their age group, with Rape Crisis volunteers generally being younger adults, WFI members having an average age in their 50s, and Tangled Rose participants being almost all over retirement age. Despite the fact that participants in this research differed in their life course stage as well as the type of volunteering that they did, very few of them (if any) conformed to the stereotype of women with time on their hands. On the contrary, the accounts of their lives that they

gave in interviews and through time diaries and poetry were ones of hectic schedules into which time for volunteering had somehow to be fitted. Ethnographic observation confirmed the challenges that these women faced in 'finding' or 'making' time for their volunteering roles. The fieldwork findings thus at first made the question of who has time for volunteering more rather than less perplexing, because the initial common-sense answer was so evidently inadequate.

The puzzle of how women who volunteer 'find' or 'make' time for this activity in already busy lives has several answers that emerge from the analysis of the research reported on in this thesis. One is that this process of finding or making time is facilitated by the voluntary organizations. It is clearly not in the interests of voluntary groups to lose members because unsustainable demands are made on those members' time. Examination of how the three voluntary organizations operate revealed that they have developed ways of working with their members to find the time to participate, for example through flexible scheduling of activities in which volunteers participate, and openness to negotiation in other ways. The same point about accommodation regarding the demands of volunteering can be made about the significant others in the personal networks of the participants in this study. Family, friends and workmates all figured in the accounts of how time for volunteering was made possible. The women also recounted how time could be found through a reflexive process in which they juggled their various roles so that there could be time for volunteering. Digital technology featured sufficiently often to merit a separate chapter alongside those devoted to voluntary organizations, family, friends and workmates, and internal conversations with the women's own selves.

This line of explanation in which individuals and organizations actively seek ways to facilitate women's time for volunteering is quite consistent with research by others in which time is managed in the lives of busy people. Hochschild's study *The Second Shift* provides a prime example of such research, in that case showing how paid work and

home life can both have time devoted to them. Such research is not limited to time accounting in a linear fashion, however, since it shows that the time devoted to each activity is not separate and discrete; rather, each activity has the potential to ‘spill over’ into different times in a person’s day. Wajcman’s study *Pressed for Time* suggests that digital technology may even increase the potential for ‘work time’ to spill over into ‘family time’ and vice versa. This thesis has sought to develop these insights into how time can escape from its scheduled slots by looking at volunteers’ management of their time. It has done so by using the idea of volunteering being in ‘balance’ with other parts of volunteers’ lives, at least as an ideal. It recognises that striking a balance in the amount of time devoted to all the different activities in a person’s life is not easy, and may perhaps be increasingly difficult in the context of contemporary social change.

This part of the thesis’s argument draws on the work of Elias, and in particular his idea of the ‘we-I balance’ – and in doing so, takes Elias’s work in a new direction by exploring, in more detail than he had, how community relationships and responsibilities are gendered. Elias recognised that people’s involvement in any social activity is not simply a matter of individual choice because it also reflects the configuration of connections in which they find themselves. There are strong pressures on members of a group to work for the good of that group and to uphold its reputation. In former times, such pressures have tilted the balance in favour of the group over the individual, but more recently the process of individualization has opened up the possibility of the ‘we-I balance’ becoming tilted in the opposite direction. Such a process of individuals putting their interests first threatens the viability of voluntary groups whose ethos is doing good for the sake of the wider group or community, and raises a different aspect of the question of who has got time to volunteer, namely that concerning their motivation to devote the time that is available to volunteering rather than to a more ‘selfish’ activity. Elias’s ideas proved illuminating in the analysis of the findings of this research, which reveal the on-going importance of identification with groups as well as with an individual self, that is, with

the 'we' as well as with the 'I'. The women in this study made time for volunteering because the groups with which they volunteered are an important part of their identity, of who they are.

These two elements of the explanation of who has time for volunteering (namely people who are able to negotiate time within situations that facilitate this, and people whose identity includes a strong group attachment) do not always sit completely comfortably alongside each other. The first attributes to people the capacity to negotiate in order to 'make' the time for volunteering, and the capacity to negotiate can sometimes be constrained. Finch and Mason's study *Negotiating Family Responsibilities* charted the extent to which negotiation can be taken but in the process acknowledged that it has limits. Some people's power to negotiate will be greater than others, and for those in unaccommodating environments their bargaining power will be very weak indeed. Volunteering will not be for everybody. But for those people whose circumstances make it at least possible, volunteering also needs a particular commitment for it to be realised, namely a commitment to the good of a group, a collective body, a community. Elias recognised that commitment to place-based communities would decline as people became more geographically-mobile, but that new collective identities would continue to emerge. The three groups reported on in this thesis indicate this to be the case, while also suggesting that local attachments can be quite resilient. Either way, 'we' identities continue to exercise a strong pull on people, including people whose busy lives make it a challenge for them to find time for volunteering.

The women in this study are nothing if not creative, and poetry is particularly important within the theme of creativity. Giving people opportunity to write poetry encourages them to meander down the pathways of their memories, and tap into their emotions, and if in a group setting, have interaction with the group and share experiences that invoke thoughts in those around them. On one level poetry may be thought of as more accessible and simpler than academic writing/reading, but at another level what it is

doing is something quite different. It can be more profound and thought-provoking to a reader than perhaps the findings of a survey that tell people ‘a certain percentage of the population do this or that’. With some poetry, what is attractive is that the meaning isn’t immediately obvious. It may be ambiguous in a way that draws people to return to it and think about it further. So in this sense it is not that poetry is simple, it may be accessible in that one can imagine oneself there, but it can also take you to another level that is more engaging because it is not giving an answer, but raising questions – and taking the reader into a more reflective mode.

Elias says reflexivity can take you to the sociological understanding where there is no such thing as the completely unconnected individual. Individuals are always parts of networks. The ‘I Am’ poems may on the surface appear to be about the individual - which is steering away from the idea of community, but as was evidenced in the poetry within this study, that was not always the case. The women often wrote their I Am poems as part of a ‘we’. So the poetry is interesting in that it shows the notion of the We-I balance. There is something here within their poetry that points to the interdependencies within their networks, and ‘the whole being greater than the sum of all the parts’. This idea can be a difficult one to grasp and to articulate, and poetry has enabled the participants in this study to express their ideas about their relationships with the groups of which they are part in creative ways.

There are, naturally, limitations to what can be claimed on the basis of the findings of the fieldwork undertaken for this thesis. There are constraints imposed by the spatial and temporal contexts in which the research was undertaken. Scotland is in several respects a unique place, particularly in the aftermath of the 2014 independence referendum. The findings reported on here for women would not necessarily be generalizable to men (although that would be an interesting project for someone to explore in the future). And the data presented here are qualitative, and need to be

interpreted with caution alongside larger-scale, quantitative data about time devoted to volunteering.

These customary caveats aside, however, there are some themes of the thesis that can be advanced with confidence. One is that a wide section of the population do navigate ways to make time to volunteer. A second is that the motivations for them to do so are for the good of the group as well as for individual satisfaction. A third is that synchronisation with others, finding time in common to be together, remains a challenge, but is one that digital communication may be doing as much to facilitate as to hamper. A fourth is that time is an elusive entity that is hard to grasp but important to study. Time has rhythms and routines that bring people together or push them apart, sometimes against their will and not necessarily in ways that are fully understood. The aim of this thesis has been to add to the understanding of these four points, along with a fifth, that the best way for a person to discover whether she has the time for volunteering is for her to try it in practice. It comes with the recommendation of the participants in this study, whose stories each contribute to our knowledge about what is possible.

This study has been an ethnography that is entwined with reflexivity. My engagement with the concepts of time, community, gender and volunteering activities were informed by my personal and professional experiences. I am aware that there are areas where I discuss my own thoughts and that these experiences helped me come to the conclusions I did. I have breathed and lived this research for four years, and it has become an intrinsic part of my everyday life and that of my family's. My experience of writing and completing this thesis has been a continual process of caring for others, (sometimes) ignoring my children, teaching, working in the community, and occasional voluntary projects. My emotional journey has been littered with feelings of joy, fear, hope and despair. Relationships were forged during this study and ideas were shared about what other possibilities exist for being in the world. I am thankful for that.

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14. Appendices

A1. Participant background Information

PSEUDONYM	D.O.B./AGE	GROUP / ORGANISATION
001. Nicole	50	WFI (National)
002_Emilía	32	Rape Crisis
003_Niamh	32	Rape Crisis
004_Millie	23	Rape Crisis
005_Carol-Anne	No age given	Rape Crisis
006_Jessica	26	Rape Crisis
007_Alison	49	Rape Crisis
008_Rose	No age given	Rape Crisis
009_Harriet	No age given	Rape Crisis
010_Ailsa	49	WFI South City
011_Madeline	56	WFI Rural
012_Kara	42	WFI Rural
013_Rhona	45	WFI Rural
014_Morag	69	WFI Rural

015_Frances	52	WFI Rural
016_Marjorie	57	WFI Rural
017_Calynn	67	WFI Rural
018_Aileen	63	WFI Rural
019_Crystal	No age given	WFI Rural
020_Gracie	65	Tangled Rose
021_Clair	40	Tangled Rose
022_Beth	64	Tangled Rose
023_Bella	61	Tangled Rose
024_Elyse	67	Tangled Rose
025_Katherine	72	Tangled Rose
026_Alisha	63	Tangled Rose
027_Sophia	No age given	Tangled Rose
028_Lilith	66	Tangled Rose
029_Margaret	77	Tangled Rose
030_Ruth	No age given	Third sector Interface (Local Authority)
031 Sally	30	Rape Crisis

A2. Participant information forms

The following documents give detail of the information that was provided to participants of the study.

A2.1 Invitation to participate

Participant Information Sheet: Who's got time for volunteering?

You are being invited to take part in a research study about women who participate or engage in voluntary/community/activist causes. Before you decide it, is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

Who is funding this research?

This research will form my PhD studies in Sociology and is being funded by the Economic and Social Sciences Research Council (ESRC). It will be overseen by the University of Edinburgh and 'Connected Communities' 'Imagine' Programme (www.imaginecommunity.org.uk/).

What is the research about?

The research is about women who volunteer or otherwise participate in various forms of civic engagement.

Why have I been chosen?

I am asking women who have experience of participating in community causes, voluntary work or activism to take part in one-to-one interviews, keep a social diary and engage in one group poetry workshop.

What would I be asked to do if I took part?

The interviews will be conducted myself. I will ask you about time management techniques, motivation, ideas of utopias and futures. I may ask you to keep a social diary, which is explained in detail in the accompanying information sheet, and I will ask you to participate in a poetry workshop.

The interview is an opportunity for you to tell me your experiences without being interrupted. The interviewer (myself) will be interested in hearing whatever things you think are important about your experiences of community, voluntary work, time management, and/or other things that you do in your life. The interview will usually take about 60-90 minutes but if you need longer I will be able to listen to you for as long as you need. The interview will take place wherever you feel comfortable, and this arrangement can be discussed. The interviewer will need to record the interview so that they have an accurate record of what has been said. The interviewer will remind you that you are being interviewed for research purposes.

Ethnographic Observation and Participation

This is where the researcher will observe and chat with you while you take part in your voluntary activities. This will allow the researcher to observe your activities and allow opportunity for informal conversation about the activities.

How is confidentiality maintained?

After the interview, I will listen to the recording and type up what was said – the interview will then be deleted from the audio-recorder and transferred to a secure file on a password protected and encrypted university file that only I can access. All recording equipment will be kept in a locked filing cabinet. You will be given a fake name (or you

can choose one) so that your responses cannot be traced back to you. Whatever you say during the interview or diary, is completely confidential. During group workshops everyone will be reminded that all information shared will remain confidential, and all will be asked to read and sign another confidentiality agreement.

What happens to the data collected?

Once the interviews are over I will look at all of the interviews I have conducted. I will use quotes from interviews to form the research. When I do this, I will remove any information (names etc.) which could be used to identify you or anyone else you have mentioned in the interviews. The research will be used to help those who work in the field of community or voluntary work understand the perspectives of women who participate in these types of work.

At some point in the future the anonymised transcripts of what interviewees have said may be made available to other researchers so that they can also study women's perspectives about community or voluntary work in more detail. The data will be kept by the ESRC in a secure environment.

What happens if I do not want to take part or if I change my mind?

You do not have to take part in the research if you do not wish to. Feel free to ask the interviewer any questions that you have about taking part. If you do decide to take part, you do not have to answer any questions you do not wish to answer. You do not have to take part in the poetry workshop if you do not want to, but please ask the researcher any questions you have about this, or any fears you may have.

Will I be paid for participating in the research?

You will not be paid for taking part, but a donation will be made to your cause or organisation. Travel expenses will be covered.

Contact for further information

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me
Maggie Laidlaw
PhD Student in Sociology
School of Social and Political Science
University of Edinburgh
maggie.laidlaw@ed.ac.uk

Professor Graham Crow from University of Edinburgh will oversee this project.

A2.2. Participant consent form.

Who's got time for volunteering?

Maggie Laidlaw
PhD Student in Sociology
School of Social and Political Science
University of Edinburgh
maggie.laidlaw@ed.ac.uk

Please Initial Box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheets for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions. ☐
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw within the time period of 6 months from participation period, without giving reason. ☐
3. I agree to take part in the above study. ☐
4. I agree to the interview / poetry workshop / consultation being audio recorded ☐

5. I agree to the interview/poetry/consultation being photographed

☐

6. I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publications

☐

7. I agree to **try** to complete 6 diary entries over a period of 8 weeks

☐

Name of Participant

Date

Signature

Name of Researcher

Date

Signature

A2.3. Child participant consent form.

Who's got time for volunteering?

Maggie Laidlaw
PhD Student in Sociology
School of Social and Political Science
University of Edinburgh
maggie.laidlaw@ed.ac.uk

Introduction

The purpose of this form is to provide you (as the parent of a child who participates in [TR] Christmas Pantomime) information that may affect your decision as to whether or not to let your child participate in my research study. The person performing the research will describe the study to you and answer all your questions. Read the information below and ask any questions you might have before deciding whether or not to give your permission for your child to take part. If you decide to let your child be involved in this study, this form will be used to record your permission.

I, Maggie Laidlaw, PhD student at Edinburgh University, am conducting a piece of research around women who volunteer, participate or engage in community/activist causes. Tangled [Rose] Line Dancing Xmas Panto is one of the case studies involved in this research. As your child participates in this pantomime, I would be most grateful if you would give permission for your child to be photographed, or filmed as part of the research. Your child may/may not be asked questions relating to how they experience the rehearsal times. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

Who is funding this research?

This research will form my PhD studies in Sociology and is being funded by the Economic and Social Sciences Research Council (ESRC). It will be overseen by the University of Edinburgh and 'Connected Communities' 'Imagine' Programme (www.imaginecommunity.org.uk/).

What is the research about?.

The research is about women who volunteer or otherwise participate in various forms of civic engagement.

- | | | |
|----|---|--------------------------|
| 2. | I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheets for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. | I agree to my child taking part in the above study | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. | I understand that my child's participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw him/her within the time period of 6 months from participation period, without giving reason. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. | I agree to my child being filmed/photographed as part of the pantomime. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. | I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publications | <input type="checkbox"/> |

_____	_____	_____
Name of Parent and child	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____

Name of Researcher	Date	Signature
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A2.4. Interview schedule: who's got time for volunteering?

This questionnaire was a guide for my own purposes. While there are set questions, it was open enough to allow participants to expand and talk about areas they felt were important to them.

INTRODUCTION/ABOUT

1. What is your name?
2. Date of birth? (age)
3. Name of town/city where you live?
4. Organisation volunteering with?
5. Could you tell me a little about where you live – the community, and what you think of it.
 - a. Can you tell me a little about the community you grew up in – and did this have an effect on why you volunteer?
6. Could you tell me a little about your home/family/work life?

Being part of a group

7. Could you tell me a little about the organisation?
8. What brought you here to this group/organisation?
9. Could you tell me a little about what you think you do?
10. Would you call yourself a volunteer?
 - a. Why/why not? Can you expand?
11. What are the benefits of what you do – in any way that you want to take the term benefit?
12. Are there any risks or downfalls of being part of this organisation?

13. Can you tell me a little about the progress of learning to be part of a group, learning to fit in?
- a. (prod) Do you feel a certain responsibility to the group/organisation? Do you feel bad about saying NO to the group/organisation?
14. What advice might you give to anyone thinking of doing what you do?
15. In what ways do you think you are valued/undervalued?
16. (Within the group/organisation) – are you included in discussions about the role/practicalities of the organisation?

Time

17. So in your work and home life, have you noticed any issues to do with time coming up? (In whatever way you want to take the term 'time'?)
- a. Prod: Are you punctual, do you tend to run late/do you hate people running late.
- b. Are you inclined to show up early for something.
- c. Prod: Do you struggle to find time to do everything you want to do?
18. Can you give me any examples of when your volunteering overlaps into your own leisure or disposable time? How do you manage this?
19. Can you tell me a little about routines you have – are they important to you?
20. How do you feel if you can't make meetings, or participate as much as others?
- a. What can you tell me a little about attending when you are tired/exhausted, or when you have other commitments?
21. What is important about the time you spend with your organisation
22. How do you keep account of your time? What systems do you use?
23. Do you have any time saving tips?

- a. Prod/prompt: Do you consciously do one thing while also doing another as a way of saving time e.g. carrying out other housework while dinner is cooking,

24. Can you tell me a little about things you like to do, just for you?

25. How do you balance your family/friends/own/volunteering time?

- a. How does this make you feel when prioritising one over the other?
- b. Do you find yourself fitting your time to suit others (expand)?

26. Can you tell me a little about work you do at home – and who else plays a role in this?

- a. How does this benefit or hinder your own/volunteer time?

27. What do you do to relax?

- a. Do you get to do it enough? Why?

28. What kind of things do you find yourself doing more/less of?

29. What would you like to see change in communities in the next five years (or in the future)?

A2.5. Diary information

Keeping a social diary as part of a research project:

This is some information to help you understand what I would like you to do when asking you to keep a social diary for this research project.

What kind of diary should I use?

I suggest that you use whatever kind of diary suits you, or you may prefer simply to write an account of each day in a notebook. If you have a computer, you may prefer to keep an electronic diary. I will provide notebooks for participants, or you may prefer to record your diary to an audio device (cell phone).

What should I put in the diary?

The contents depend very much on your own individual situation. You should be as honest as possible and include anything you feel is relevant to you, - your thoughts, experiences and accounts of your day. **You do not have to fill a diary in every day.**

On days that you would volunteer or participate with your organisation or cause, or that you do something at home/your own time that benefits your cause (or another person), I ask that you note it down. On days when you volunteer, I would like you to note down some thoughts before you leave, and again on your return home.

I have provided some examples of what you might include as a guide to assist you when completing the diary. You will probably find that some are more applicable to your circumstances than others, so ignore any that aren't appropriate. Remember to include anything important to you that the suggestions here do not cover.

About you

Your name, cause, how often you participate with your cause. What you think you do to benefit your organisation/group/project.

Some things you may like to include in your diary;

Entry Before leaving

- How your day has been/what you have been doing (paid work/visiting friends/looking after family/socialising/swimming/dancing)?
- Are you looking forward to participating today?

- Tired/happy/?
- How did you remember about today's event?
- What are you most looking forward/not looking forward to?
- Are you feeling guilty about prioritising this over something else?
- Has anyone at home assisted you in order for you to participate in your cause? This may be by them helping with childcare or family duties, or by giving you a lift.

On return

- How it went?
- Was it a successful/satisfactory event? Do you feel the same on return as you did before leaving? What benefit you get (if any) from participating?
- What are your thoughts?

You do not have to write pages of information. You can write as little or as much as you want, however the more you tell me, the better it will be for this study. You can add additional information that you may feel is relevant.

If you are doing any work at home for your cause, please include details of that also. Please tell me if you are, for instance, writing emails, or making costumes for your cause, while simultaneously doing other things at home. (For example, you may be drafting an email while also making a meal). Please also include in you daily entry, any times you have spent thinking about your cause, (do you lie awake at night worrying or trying to think of ways to help, or benefit the cause or organisation?). I am interested in how you fit your voluntary work around your paid work/family/leisure time, and if you find this difficult or easy. I would like your honest thoughts on how your day has gone, and how you feel.

Please feel free to add images, if this helps remind you, or explain an entry in your diary.

Contact for further information

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me by email.

Maggie Laidlaw
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University of Edinburgh
maggie.laidlaw@ed.ac.uk

Professor Graham Crow from University of Edinburgh will oversee this project.

A3. Poetry

A3.1 Poetry workshop information

As part of participating in this research project, you will be asked to take part in a group poetry workshop. Please do not worry, you are not being asked to compose beautiful examples of literary genius. The purpose of using poetry in social sciences research is that it opens a space outside of the boundaries of traditional methods of data gathering; a space that improves the ‘critical attentiveness, collaboration and experimentation’ of both data gathering and dissemination of analysis. Poetry is an innovative approach to the inquiry of understandings of personal experience, and its use within social science research has increased over the years as it provides a space to represent data that pays attention to *“multiple meaning, identity work and subjugated perspectives”*.

Poetry as a research tool, offers not only an alternative way of presenting the same information (as that gathered through interviews), rather, it can help the researcher *“evoke different meanings from the data, work through a different set of issues, and help the audience receive the data differently”* (Leavy, 2009 p.64)

What to expect

Participants will be invited to talk about their experiences of volunteering as a group, while also discussing the language and metaphors we use about time (eg ‘time is money’; ‘time well spent’; ‘time is short’; ‘making/finding time’). We will use pre-designed templates, simple exercises, and word games while exploring the meanings behind these metaphors and how we think about time to create simple forms of poetry. Participants will be given the opportunity to lead and offer changes to the workshop; allowing control over what they feel happy sharing, while also allowing them to find meaning to their own experiences.

As a group, or as individuals, we will attempt to create some poetry from our discussions, but the benefits from workshops of this kind are not simply written forms of poetry by the

participants but language and phrases that can be utilised by the researcher in the creation of 'narrative poetry' following the event.

Contact for further information

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me by email:
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University of Edinburgh
maggie.laidlaw@ed.ac.uk

Professor Graham Crow from University of Edinburgh will oversee this project.

A3.2 Workshop plan

POETRY WORKSHOP PLAN: WOMEN FOR INDEPENDENCE: 16TH DEC 2015: 7 - 10pm.

We are going to spend the next three (very quick) hours creating some poetry in relation to your lives, your activism, and your community). We all have the tools to write a poem. How do I know? I know because we all use the same tools to communicate and describe our lives. We all have experiences of love, loss, joy, heartbreak, despair. We all have memories, and hopes for the future. We all have experiences of the everyday and of great accomplishment. We all use language to express sensory experience, to make comparisons, and to sound good.

7pm SHORT ICE BREAKER: (to loosen everyone up).

Choose a sweetie – the colour will decide what you share with us.

Red -	Emotion – to do with being a member of women for Indy
Yellow -	Fact about being a member of women for Indy
Orange-	Something Positive to being a member of the group
Purple-	something difficult or downfall to being an activist, while working or having a family
Green-	One solution to any problems

7.15: THE POET'S TOOLS

7.20: POETRY EXERCISE 1: '*I Am*' TEMPLATE (trying out some of the thoughts and suggestions that emerge from the brainstorming exercise)

7.45: FOOD & A BLETHER (a wee break to allow those creative thoughts to develop further)

8.15: MAIN POETRY EXERCISE (now's the chance to let all those creative thoughts to the next level)

Keep in mind some of the things you created in the last exercise

9.30: READING OF POETRY (prepare to be amazed with your results)

3.2.1 The Poets Tools (by Daniel Tysdal)

Imagery

Metaphor Music

Imagery	compose a phrase that conveys an image – it is language that represent sensory experience, or that stimulates the senses of the reader. (sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, hunger, movement) (or the absence of any of these e.g. silence)
Comparison	Similes, (as, like)
Metaphor	A more direct comparison that does not use ‘as’ or ‘like’ Expand on these comparisons – how is something like a colour, season, animal etc...tease it out
Music	Rhyme – its sound and its placement, (Assonates - correspondent vowel sounds) (Alliteration – similar consonant sounds (around the rugged rock the ragged rascal ran)

A3.3 Exercise 1: I AM poetry

Method: complete each line. Once you have this 'skeleton', the poem can be restructured to read without the 'I am' / 'I wonder' etc.

I am (e.g. two special characteristics or colours/sounds/moments)

I wonder (something you are actually curious about)

I hear (an imaginary sound)

I see (an imaginary sight)

I want (an actual desire)

I am (the first line of the poem restated)

I pretend (something you pretend to do)

I feel (a feeling about something imaginary, one can be a non-primary colour or an emotion)

I touch (an imaginary touch)

I worry (something that really bothers you)

I cry (something that makes you very sad)

I am (the first line of the poem repeated)

I understand (something you know is true)

I say (something you believe in)

I dream (something you actually dream about)

I try (something you make an effort to do)

I hope (something you actually hope for)

I am (the first line of the poem repeated)

A3.4 Exercise 2: Writing a poem exercise

We are going to Write down 11 things from your day or time with WFI clacks. And try to do this as quickly as possible so that it is fluid and organic – the reason for this is that your brain is already making connections that you don't realise – and if you think too hard about them then you are forcing information in there.

1. 3 things you find yourself doing everyday.
2. 3 non primary colours.
3. Object you have encountered in a dream.
4. Experience as a child, that made you angry at the time, or now.
5. A forbidden thought pertaining to your life:
6. Three questions for which you've never found an answer to (in relation to time, yourself, communities, or volunteering).
7. Three emotions relating to activism and volunteering.
8. Three slant rhymes where the consonants are similar e.g. moments/memories.
9. Three things that people said to you in last 48 hours (short phrases).
10. Three transitional objects that got you from one place in your life to another.
11. If you had another women's group, what would its name be.

WRITING THE POEM:

Now the fun bit (leave some space between what we are doing, because we are doing them out of order, but you may want to restructure later). You may want to take three pieces of paper for this bit – you can put it altogether later (one page for beginning, middle and end of poem).

Beginning of poem

12. Take #11 – that's going to be the title of your poem.

13. First line of poem is #6 - one of these questions.

Middle of poem – item 5 – a forbidden thought.

14. End of poem #9 – 3 things that people have said to you in the last 48 hours.

Now anywhere take a combination of #4 and #7 – and combine these to make one sentence/thought or idea – and place in your poem where it makes sense (this can be restructured later).

If you are finding a theme at this point – then go with it...you're the common denominator in all of this

15. Then take #2 and #8 so take one of your colours and combine with a slant rhyme.

16. Now see what you have on the page, and start to fill in the spaces or make connections where you feel they might fit.

17. You may find that you want to change some things at this point, tweak a sentence here and there if you find a theme emerging – that's ok... this is your first draft.

A4. Ailish writing

Over the last year that I have been working at the Rape Crisis centre, my view of social activism has shifted dramatically. Whereas I previously belonged to groups where direct action was seen as the pinnacle of resistance, or where success was beating the system at its own game, I now have no desire to employ tools like violence and capitalism, oppressive tools, to reach liberation; partly because it seems like an ethical contradiction, and partly because we need to demonstrate successful alternatives to make them widely viable. Rape Crisis, for me, feels like a model of a viable alternative way of working as a society. Everyone who comes in to work at the centre, paid or unpaid, is focused on working with everyone else at the centre, workers or clients, to make the world a better place to exist in. It'd be naive to say there are no egos or conflicts, but they do not seem to be indulged or to run rampant, and I have yet to see them emerge. Everyone chips in. The training is collaborative, with everyone getting professional development on the job. Support with clients is collaborative, with a person centred model being employed. Decisions are collaborative, with issues or worries being frequently discussed in the office. There is no secretary. We all answer the door. We all make the tea. Given the controversial place that radical feminism still occupies in our society and the fractured nature of the feminist movement, I am proud to say that I see my role at the centre as that of a collaborator.

I also see my role at the centre as a key part of my identity as a feminist, with my interest in feminism moving further from theory and closer to practice. Obviously a theoretical framework is imperative to make practice effective, but rather than sit and pour over articles by twenty-something bloggers trying to figure it all out, I can talk to someone who knows things my generation has taken for granted or taken to be passed and learn from them not only how vital and sensible these fundamentals and nuances of feminism are, but the best ways to make those theories useful. I listen to and learn from the women around me, and after encouragement and acknowledgement, I have started to speak and to teach, both new volunteers and people in other parts of my life.

Solidarity as a term can mean strikes and boycotts (and in the right cases I think it should), but I'm also seeing its application as hearing people's voices, validating their experiences and sharing in their ideas. Yes, I am part of a community at Rape Crisis united by the struggle against the patriarchy, but I'm also a part of a group of women who look out for each other, and share chocolates, and swap shifts with you so you can have date night.

My definition of utopia is process-driven; asymptotic. It is a space which we will never completely create, which we should always try to be creating. In Glasgow, sandwiched in between a pub and a Mexican restaurant, five flights up, is a small space which is resisting through existing on its own terms, where knowledge does not have to be logical or intellectual to be valid, where you will always be offered a cup of tea, and where there are women patiently showing and telling other women that they are valuable, so valuable, still valuable, until it starts to stick.

Ailish

